

Expansions on the Gospel of St Mark

Introduction

This document concerns the last of the four Gospels as posted on this homepage. It follows in accord with the “expansion” format pertaining to many biblical books which have already been uploaded. As noted in most of these documents, the aim is to assist the reader in viewing these biblical texts through the lens of *lectio divina*. That practice has been elaborated a number of times and consists of the slow, careful read of scripture as an aide to prayer. So the text at hand which falls under this category isn’t a commentary nor even what you could call a series of spiritual notes. In a way the approach at hand makes for a boring read should one consider it as a source to obtain information about the Gospel of Saint Mark.

I consider the notations not entirely unlike what the Hebrew word *selah* found in the Psalms represents. *Selah* is found often at the end of verses though it’s exact meaning is unknown. However, it’s widely understood as a pause, a moment for reflection or a musical cue. Gregory of Nyssa dedicates a whole book to this entitled **Inscriptions on the Psalms** which is posted on this homepage. Though he doesn’t speak of the phrase *lectio divina* in this context, surely you can see he leans in that direction.

As most of us know, Mark’s Gospel is short and quite terse as well as compact. This is backed up by his famous use of *euthus* or “immediately” which occurs forty-one times. *Euthus* is similarly backed up, if you will, by the conjunctive *kai* frequently rendered as “and.” In fact, *kai* begins virtually every verse which moves the text along at an astonishing speed. At the same time it doesn’t rush the reader through the text. The large number of references to *euthus* led me to list the number of times *kai* appears. That number which I’m certain will turn out to be enormous won’t be listed until this document is completed. ¹ So both the use of *euthus* and *kai* are essential to an understanding of Mark’s Gospel.

As for Mark’s Gospel being the last of the four, its straight-forward, almost stripped down approach pretty much laying out bare facts which give little wiggle room for expanding the text at hand. That made it quite challenging...in other words, little from which to draw milk, so to speak. In spite of this I figured why not go ahead and see what comes of the enterprise. As with any biblical text, I knew it would have treasures proper to itself which quickly turned out to be true.

¹More specifically I mean the number of times *kai* begins a verse. Each time *kai* is found in the Gospel text at hand it will be numbered according to two parts: first the number as it appears in a sequence with regard to the entire text followed by the number of occurrences in the chapter at hand, for example, *kai* #151-13. This numbering doesn’t apply to Chapter One because it’s the first in line. Keep in mind that the conjunctive *kai* isn’t peculiar to St. Mark. In fact, it’s quite common in the other Gospels. The Hebrew equivalent is v- and also is found a countless number of times.

As the text moves on, transliterated Greek words become more common. In order to avoid repeating any definitions or the like, reoccurring words will be followed by a plus sign, +. ² Also it should be noted that prepositions in Greek are important both free standing and as prefaced to nouns, verbs as well as adverbs. In many instances this will be pointed out because they govern the meaning of the text. Thus a lot depends upon how we read them. The English text is **The Holy Bible, Revised Standard Version** (San Francisco, 2015).

Postings will be made from time to time until the document is complete and reviewed one more time.

Chapter One

Vs. 1: The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. ³

I've opted not to insert individual verses in this document. However, I start off with this one exception because it reflects Mark's concise approach. The only difference is that it begins without the conjunctive *kai* or "and" which is natural for an introductory verse.

The bare simplicity of these words reflects the fact that Mark will be putting down his reflections as briefly and compactly as humanly possible without compromising his message about Jesus Christ. For him it's the best way for the Gospel to present itself or more accurately, the best way to allow the essential message and person of Jesus Christ to come to the fore. In this way Jesus, Mark-as-author and the readers/listeners of the Gospel are all caught up as one.

Mark's terse opening words set the stage for how he presents his Gospel...in other words, no fooling around. In fact, chances are most people welcome this approach. They have the essence of what Jesus is about. They can rely upon teachers for fleshing out any details later on. If too much information were to hit them at once, there would be more chances to misunderstand the Gospel. And as we know from history, the early church saw plenty of that. Furthermore, this first verse sends a clear message. Mark won't be getting into more difficult issues which the other Gospels will tackle. In fact, you can almost feel these three evangelists almost casting a jealous eye at how appealing he writes for the common man.

As for the very first word of Mark's Gospel, *arche* or beginning, it's more along the lines of a commencement which contains all that is about to unfold with regard to *euaggelion* or Gospel, that word translated as good news. Actually *eu-* prefaced to the verbal root

² *Euthus* lacks + because it occurs so often.

³A footnote in the **RSV** says that "other ancient authorities omit "the Son of God." The Greek text has *huiou theou* in parentheses.

aggello (to bring news of) is the adverbial form of *agathos* or good. Thus we could say that the Gospel is an announcing or proclaiming done well, in a good or pleasing fashion both its presentation and its message.

We could say that in all simplicity *arche* has a singular objects, *euaggelion* as applied to Jesus Christ. In other words, we have two wrapped into one. Should we accept the observation noted in footnote two, we can add a third and fourth genitive, “of the Son of God.” Thus right away Jesus as man is presented with a special title which infers he’s divine. Surely those receiving this *euaggelion* for the first time can’t help but be intrigued with what will follow. Not only that, they will grow in appreciation of how both *euthus* and *kai* noted in the Introduction are used to shepherd themselves through the text thereby covering the basics.

Vs. 2 begins with *kathos* or “as” and can be rendered as “according to.” In a way this adverb represents that quickness associated with Mark by introducing a quote from the prophet Isaiah. From what academic sources say about this Gospel, it’s written for Gentiles and especially Romans. So in a way Mark is throwing out an unfamiliar source but with the intent of giving background information about Jesus. Also he’s offering some legitimacy, that Jesus didn’t come on the scene out of the clear blue. The best part about Isaiah is that he’s the most famous of all Israel’s prophets. Chances are those reading or listening to Mark’s Gospel at least heard of him. Even mention of the word “prophet” helps give his words some legitimacy. Just about everyone in the ancient world knew that title implied someone highly respected who had a special relationship with the transcendent realm.

As for the quote in vss. 1 and 2, they are combined as if from one source. In reality what we have in vs. 2 comes from Malachi, the last prophet in the Hebrew canon. Wisely Mark attributes it to Isaiah, for most likely none of those he’s addressing heard of this prophet.⁴ As for the quote, first comes the original verse in full follows by the Septuagint used by Mark:

“Behold, I send my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple; the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight, behold, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts.” This verse begins with *hineh*⁵ or behold in order to get everyone’s attention because the Lord is sending not any messenger or *mal’ak* but his very own to prepare the way before him or literally “to my faces” or *lepanay*. Nothings is said of this way or *derek* nor of the preparation involved, just that it’s to be expected. Nevertheless it ties in with the people seeking or *baqash* the Lord that has been going on for some time. It will come to completion all at once or *pit’om*, also in a moment when the Lord enters his temple.

⁴A footnote to the **NIV Study Bible** reads “Isaiah here receives pride of place because he stands at the head of the prophetic canon.”

⁵ The next six words are Hebrew.

This leads to the second part of the verse from Malachi, namely, the messenger of *mal'ak* already mentioned with whom the people seemed to have had some foreknowledge or experience because already they had taken delight in him, *chaphets* expressive of ardor or intense desire. This delight is traceable to the messenger being associated with the covenant, that going all the way back to the time of Moses. So with that familiarity which had extended over many generations, the people had an inkling as what this messenger would convey to them. That is to say, he would announce to them the expected Messiah. As for this verse, it's cited in Mt 11.10 with reference to John the Baptist.

"Behold, I send my messenger before your face who shall prepare your way" which is cited in vs. 2. *Idou* is the equivalent to *hineh* and is indicative of a certain immediacy. The verb *apostello* also as to dispatch is in the present tense and is equivalent to the Hebrew *shalach*. Note that the future tense isn't used to signal something yet to happen. Already the Lord had made up his mind which is why he simply pronounces his intent, thereby making it known to all. As for the two versions, both agree upon the nature of a messenger, *aggelos* being equivalent to the Hebrew *mal'ak* similarly applied to an angel. Thus an angel is a heavenly being dispatched to carry out a divine command.

As for the sending (*apostello* being the verbal root for apostle, *apostolos*) at hand, it goes "before your face," *prosopon*. The preposition *pro* or before gives the impression of being unavoidably in one's face, the Lord making it virtually impossible for anyone to miss the messenger. Implied too is that the act of sending itself is passing and easy to miss, that one has to be sharp enough to perceive it. Also it's highly personal. The aim is to prepare not a way but your way or *hodos* which here intimates a mode of life. As for the nature of this preparation (*kataskeuazo*) nothing is said except that it will occur in the future. The verbal root *skeuazo* also means to provide whereas the preposition *kata-* or in accord with prefaced to it imparts a greater urgency of preparation, down in the sense of giving it due focus. Compare it with *etoimazo* similarly meaning to prepare though it conveys putting more in a state of readiness. As for *kataskeuazo*, it remains somewhat vague...perhaps deliberately so...because in the next verse we have another *hodos*, one belonging to the Lord. And so the preparation the messenger will do will set the stage for those to whom it's announced to act similarly.

As for vs. 3, note some observations with regard to the Hebrew text followed by the Greek: The full verse runs as follows: "A voice cries: 'In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.'" There's no specific identity as to this voice or *qol* which could be Isaiah himself and is used with *qara'*. Actually the two words sound the same, *qol qore'*. This passage is also found in Mt 3.3 which differs somewhat: "The voice of one crying in the wilderness: prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths." Within the desert or *midbar* the voice bids a preparation or *panah* which fundamentally means to turn and thus intimates repentance. Note the two words for a road, *derek* and *mislah*. The former can apply to a way of life whereas the latter suggests a raised embankment and is used with the preposition *l-*, literally as "to our God."

Vs. 3 is a continuation of the previous verse and starts off with a similar message of preparation which can be from another person compared with the Lord's messenger. His voice is crying in the wilderness, *boao* intimating considerable anguish. Apparently this voice which has yet to be identified is sufficiently loud that despite being in a remote area (*eremos* inferring isolation), it reverberated far and wide. As noted above, the message to prepare or *etoimazo* differs from *kataskeuazo*. In addition to this verb applied to the way (singular) of the Lord, those to whom it's addressed are to make his paths (plural) straight, *tribos* being more a defined route. Although these paths already exist, they require a straightening-out, *eutheia*. As already noted, *eu-* is the adverbial form of *agathos* or good prefaced to a verbal root meaning to set or to place and thus to do so well, in a becoming manner.

At last in vs. 4 Mark provides us with an identifiable person, John, whose function in life goes by the present participle *baptizon*, the one who's doing the baptizing in the desert. The way Mark presents this is as though he had come upon John in a deserted place. Apparently it was his voice that had been crying...reverberating...as it caught the attention of people. He did this by preaching or *kerusso*, a verb which intimates a formal type of proclamation. Thus John's crying or *boao* becomes this *kerusso*. As for baptism or *baptisma*, its association with John is the first mention of this term in the Bible. Should he have baptized closer to an inhabited place, notably Jerusalem, the effect would have been minimal. People needed to remove themselves voluntarily from such places which were filled with all sorts of noise and commotion. Not everyone was sensitive to *boao*-turned-to-*kerusso*. And so those who complied were faced with a lot of explaining to those who did not. Thus a certain tension must have been present between the two groups.

Vs. 4 calls John's baptism one of repentance or *metanoia* which suggests there might be several types of *metanoia*, this one being among the most important. As for *metanoia*, it's a word closely associated with the New Testament and comprised of the root *noos* or mind prefaced with the preposition *meta-* or after...a placing of one's mind after, after being the current state of affairs which needs to be left behind. Usually that which is left behind is undesirable and in favor of a new way of looking at things. In the verse at hand, this mind-being-after is literally into (*eis*) the forgiveness of sins, *aphesis* being the freeing from an obligation which is more like a relief from the burden of sin, *hamartia* which can be taken as a departure from the divine standard of righteousness.

Vs. 5 (begins with *kai*, #1) speaks of "all" with regard to those inhabitants of Judea and Jerusalem. One gets the impression that the inhabitants of these two areas well as others went out en masse to John, *pros* indicative of direction towards-which. In reality there must have been far few people though enough to get attention from the general population, especially religious authorities. Once at the Jordan River, John baptized them as they confessed their sins, *exomologeō* also as to declare openly, the preposition *ex-* or from signifying this openness. The form of this confession isn't stated. Most likely people didn't blurt out their individual sins but loudly proclaimed their guilt and need for forgiveness.

Some perhaps did this along with John as they were being baptized or beforehand while standing in line.

Vs. 6 begins with the conjunctive *kai* (#2) rendered here as “now,” a way to put attention on him as messenger and as one crying in the wilderness. The picture we have of John is an ascetic to the ^hth degree and also fits the common notion we have of someone who had been living alone in the wilderness for some time though that time span isn’t given. The same applies to what had made John go out there to preach. Surely he must have spent considerable time pondering the words of both Malachi and Isaiah not to mention other prophets. Chances are he didn’t have these texts with him but had gone over them thoroughly before living alone. Thus the picture we have of John is one after a good number of years preparing for this role of one who baptizes, the present participle *baptizon* as noted in vs. 4.

Vs. 7 (*kai*, #3) has John preaching, *kerusso* + just as important as his role of baptizing. His speaking about someone coming after him must have made those present long for this mystery man who’s mightier, the comparative of *ischuros* or strong whether physically, mentally or spiritually. John too is quick to show his submission to this man whom most people realized he knew beforehand. Is he in fact the long-anticipated Messiah who will free Israel from Roman rule? Although we know John and Jesus were cousins and that the former leapt in his mother’s womb when Mary, pregnant with Jesus, visited Elizabeth (cf. Lk 1.41), there’s no account of the two knowing each other. Actually that womb-to-womb contact was more sufficient than anything done otherwise. Thus it seemed that the two men had lived apart until the present moment.

In vs. 8 John makes it absolutely clear to those present that although he’s baptizing in water, the one who’s stronger will also engage in baptizing but will do so literally “in the Holy Spirit” or *Pneuma* also as breath. Thus we have two types of baptizing or dipping, if you will: the typical one in water and the new one in *Pneuma* which can be taken as breath, chiefly an exhaling. Such words could have confused many who had made the trek out to the wilderness. Was it worth being baptized by John when he claimed another man will do it in a completely different manner? If this man turned out to be the expected Messiah, quickly everyone would abandon John.

Vs. 9 (*kai* #4) begins with the phrase “in those days” which seems to refer to the time when Jesus’ cousin John had been engaged in doing baptisms. The phrase can be a way of having John’s baptizing with water make ready to give way for Jesus’ baptizing with the Holy Spirit. This verse is significant in that it mentions the home town of Jesus (Nazareth) and his going to the Jordan River to be baptized by John. Nothing is said as to why or how he made his leave as an adult. Mark’s Gospel begins with Jesus as a grown man and says nothing of his origin. However, the experience both he and his cousin had while in the wombs of their respective mothers as recounted in Luke’s Gospel must have reminded them that both were destined to meet. As for leaving Nazareth, the way it’s

presented, simple and straight-forward, suggests it was permanent, that Jesus was about to embark on a mission that soon would become clear.

Vs. 10 (*kai* #5) we have Jesus standing in line like anyone else awaiting to be baptized by John. Nothing is said as to whether they recognized one another though this was most likely. Upon encountering Jesus John must have recalled his having leapt in his mother's womb, *skirtao* not unlike a lamb leaping for joy. Chances are the encounter was quick, the two not lingering, just like their encounter in the wombs of their respective mothers. Here, of course, is a prime example when language fails. Instead we have *euthus* or immediately which leads to Jesus seeing the heavens opened, *schizo* being a strong verb connoting a ripping apart. And so the bright blue sky of the desert was opened up all at once allowing the *Pneuma* + to make its appearance. In contrast to the violence of *schizo* we have the gentleness of a dove or *peristera* also as a pigeon descending literally "into (*eis*) him."

Vs. 11 (*kai* #6) forms part of the previous verse with a voice (*phone*) coming from heaven. It works together with the Spirit descending upon Jesus as noted in vs. 10 before heaven closes and lets it back inside. Unlike the Spirit, the voice didn't hang out there roaming around aimlessly but we could say it rested upon Jesus though the text isn't explicit about this. And so the Father (presumably the source of *phone*) had to work quickly before the *schizo* or rendering of the heavens disappeared. This voice called Jesus not just son but "my son" and "the beloved," not "my beloved." As for the second title *ho agapetos*, it's from the verb *agapao* (hence *agape*) to love but in the fuller sense of having a warm regard or high esteem. Right after stating these two titles, if you will, the voice speaks to Jesus in the first person singular as to being pleased in him, *eudokeo* consisting of the root *dokeo*, to think, to supposed, prefaced with *eu-* or well, the adverbial form of *agathos* (good). The text doesn't say whether those gathered at the Jordan had heard this voice, including John.

Vs. 12 begins with *kai* (#7) though it goes untranslated perhaps because in a way it's subsumed by *euthus* or immediately. Here *euthus* refers to what John and most likely other witnesses saw, that is, not so much Jesus departing but being forcefully driven away, *ekballo* more like being cast out, *ek-*. It must have astonished everyone, for the *Pneuma* + acted like an invisible force...a strong wind...pushing at the back of Jesus. Since it was wind, the sound must have been quite strong. The place where John was baptizing was in the wilderness, the noun *eremos* + also applicable here. That could mean the *Pneuma* didn't have to blow Jesus far away.

The *Pneuma* knew exactly what it was doing. The haste with which it blew Jesus was intended to prevent anyone from running after Jesus. Besides, at this early stage Jesus was basically a nobody. People were more focused upon John though from this point on there was a definite shift in how people thought of him. This mystery man who was so quickly whisked away might be more worth paying attention to. The only trouble is that he disappeared just as quickly as he had come on the scene so people didn't have a change to

know him.

Vs. 13 begins with the conjunctive *kai* (#8) saying that Jesus was in the wilderness forty days, this being representative of a sacred time paralleling the forty years of Israel in the Sinai wilderness. During this time Jesus was tempted by Satan, *peirazo* also as to put to the trial or test. Again, Mark doesn't provide the details, typical of his Gospel, he being more intent on laying out the bare facts which can be filled in at another time by competent teachers. He also says that Jesus was with the wild beasts (*therion*) implying that he got along just fine with them, even enjoying their company.

Perhaps in their unique way these beasts assisted Jesus against those temptations coming from Satan, the wilderness being a place he favored. Thus we have Satan and the wild beasts in their natural habitat "invaded" by someone from the outside. Indeed, Jesus was far from being alone, accompanied as he was by these two non-human being entities implying that he had spent quite a busy forty days. Added to this mix were angels which ministered to him, *diakoneo* basically as to function as an intermediary. Since the nature of an angel or *aggelos* is a messenger, this may have involved bringing messages back and forth to the Father.

Another sign that Mark is giving the equivalent of a thumbnail sketch of Jesus' life and activity is vs. 14 where John had been arrested. The reason why and by whom is omitted, just that it had happened. Anyone interested naturally would be dying to know the details. The verb for arrested is *paradidomai*, literally to hand over beside, *para-*. After this had happened, the verse continues by saying that Jesus came into Galilee preaching, *kerusso* + being used in vs. 7 as with John. The difference, of course, is that Jesus is associated with the gospel of God, *euaggelion* basically as good news, another word with the adverbial *eu-* or well. It seems that John had to get out of the way for this *kerusso* to happen; otherwise the two men would have been in a kind of undue competition and thus confusing the people.

Vs. 15 (*kai* #9) is part of the previous verse which contains the essence of Jesus' message consisting of four parts:

-Time is fulfilled: *kairos* being a specific point of time or event along with the verb *pleroo* or to fulfill in the sense of being at hand and signifying completion. Compare this with the still-to-be sense of *eggizo* or nearness which is next.

-Kingdom of God at hand: *basileia* or kingship, royal power and thus implying a king. It is not yet present but in the process of approaching, of drawing near, *eggizo*.

-Repent: *metanoeo* or literally to put one's mind or *nous* after, *meta-*. This putting after implies leaving a habitual state of behavior and advancing to a new one which is radically different.

-Believe in the gospel: *pisteuo* or to have faith in the *euaggelion* + or the good news which Jesus began preaching in Galilee. As for this good news, Mark simply says it is as such without giving details.

Vs. 16 (*kai* #10) shifts attention to Jesus by the Sea of Galilee where he saw both Simon and his brother Andrew casting nets into the lake. In other words, they weren't in boats but fishing from on the shore. Without missing a beat, in vs. 17 (*kai* #11) Jesus summons both to come with him, for he'll make them fishers of men. They dropped what they were doing and followed Jesus, vs. 18 beginning with *kai* #12 followed by *euthus*. There had to be something attractive in what Jesus said about applying their trade to a calling that could promise more income as well as the potential for fame. At this juncture the text gives little wiggle room for expansion compared with the other three Gospels. We're dealing with bare facts of a kind of historical documents where events are listed one after the other. Very little is presented as fillers.

In vs. 19 (*kai* #13) Jesus walks along further but now with the two brothers in tow who must have peppered him with all sorts of questions as to how they will fish for men. In sum, they were eager to know what was in it for themselves. Jesus interrupted them when he saw James and his brother John. He called them (vs. 20 with *kai* #14) at once (*euthus*) who left their father and hired servants. This time Mark gives no details, however slight (as with Simon and Andrew) as to why they should simply drop everything and walk away. Now we have four men, the two pairs of brothers most likely knowing each other and their respective families. This must have caused considerable consternation among their families and concern about Jesus who to them was viewed as an outsider...a kind of co-man...who has an unsettling ability to make people get up and walk away with him to points unknown.

Vs. 21 (*kai* #15) has Jesus and his small band enter the town of Capernaum on the northern edge of the Sea of Galilee where at once (*euthus*) he enters the local synagogue. Not only that, he begins to teach, *didasko*. So here we have a stranger some forty miles from Nazareth with two sets of brothers who takes the initiative to lead the congregation. Chances are the brothers had met some of the congregants beforehand and told them that Jesus would be a great guest speaker as we'd put it. The recommendation of the brothers proved to be a spectacular success and indeed a feather in their respective caps.

Vs. 22 begins with *kai* (#16) where all present in the synagogue were totally captivated by Jesus' teaching, the preposition *ek-* or from prefaced to the verbal root *plesso* (to strike, to smite) giving it that greater force, i.e., *ekplesso*. If that weren't enough, it's intensified by the preposition *epi*, literally "upon his teaching" or *didache*. Those present were accustomed to being taught by the scribes, that most likely being fairly rote material concerning *Torah* and religious observance designed to keep the local population submissive. Despite their lack of education, the people were savvy enough to realize that the scribes lacked authority or *exousia* whereas they recognized it as present in Jesus as he taught, *didasko* +. You could say these down-to-earth peasants could spot a sophist-like mentality out of the clear blue. Chances are that similar to the scribes, Jesus taught the *Torah* but did so in accord with the way the Lord had handed it down to Moses and not overlaid with religious observances. Such is the true meaning of authority. As for the two sets of

brothers, they couldn't help but beam with joy and self-satisfaction for having introduced Jesus to their fellow congregants.

All went well in the synagogue until a man walked in who had an unclean spirit, this being *kai* #17 along with *euthus*) in vs. 24 rendered "and immediately." Although this man isn't identified, chances are he was known by everyone, including the brothers. As for the *pneuma* + or spirit described as *akathartos*, it goes unspecified. From what he says, this uncleanness seems to be worse than a physical one, most likely as possessed by an evil spirit. It's as though some entity within the man were speaking...more than one being...for the first person plural is used which reads literally "what to us and to you?" These words form part of vs. 24, a continuation of the previous verse which ends with the verb *anakrazo*, the preposition *ana-* intensifying the root as to cry out above.

The man whom the locals used as a kind of spokesman then says that Jesus has come to destroy them, *apollumi* also as bring to ruin. Finally the man reverts to the first person singular saying that he knows Jesus (*oida* also to have intimate knowledge) as the Holy One (*Ho Agios*) of God. This astonished everyone. They knew by the way Jesus taught that he was different but obviously were incapable of recognizing him as being fully divine. The same applied to the brothers. It was thanks to this man with the unclean spirit that this matter came to a head.

Vs. 25 has *kai* (#18) translated as "but" which as noted already serves to move the text along which here has assumed an almost nerve-racking place. Now Jesus rebukes the man with the unclean spirit, *epitimao* being the verb whose root fundamentally means to pay honor, to be worthy and is prefaced with the preposition *epi-* or upon which gives the rebuke much more emphasis. This is manifested further by two uses of the preposition *ex-* or from, one prefaced to the verbal root *erchomai* and the other as "from him."

In response to this strong rebuke in vs. 26 (*kai* #19) we have three rapid stages with regard to the unclean spirit. First it convulsed the man, *sparasso* also as to shake to and fro, cries out with a loud voice or *phoneo* and the noun from which it's derived, *phone* + and it came out of the man, another instance of a double *ex-*, one prefaced to the verbal root *erchomai* + and the other as "from him." No small wonder (*kai* #20 beginning vs. 27) that everyone was amazed (*thambeo*) and naturally asked among themselves what this was all about where *su-* of *suzeteo* is a form of *sum-* or with showing the intense interaction among all present.

Those in the synagogue...again, they were basically peasants...exclaimed that they were hearing a new teaching or *didache* +. Interestingly they applied this word not so much as to the man cured from the unclean spirit but to the authority or *exousia* + Jesus has over such spirits. Mark then observes in vs. 28 which begins with *kai* #21 and contains *euthus* that Jesus' fame spread all over the region of Galilee, *pantachou* also as to all directions. Here is one instance where *euthus* indeed has special significance. Thus Jesus is caught in a quandary. He wishes to fulfill his mission but dislikes the fame associated with it. He

must have been quite aware of such a dilemma before setting out on his mission and had used the forty days in the wilderness as a means to ponder this.

Vs. 29 (*kai* #22 and *euthus*) has them leaving the synagogue and entering the house of Simon and Andrew along with James and John. Chances are this house was nearby as in Capernaum and served as a refuge to escape the crowds. It so happened that Simon's mother-in-law was ill, and Jesus cured her simply by taking her by the hand, vs. 31 being *kai* #23. At once the fever left and she began serving (*diakoneo* +) Jesus and the two sets of brothers. We don't know this woman's name, let alone Simon's wife who isn't mentioned as being present. Surely the two women were less than happy with Jesus have virtually stolen Simon from them which meant they were left to their own devices. The same would have applied to James and John. Perhaps they got wind of the two being there yet were so angry at having been suddenly abandoned they stayed away. For a husband to get up leave was worse than divorce. The wife and children would be close to defenseless. You can't help but wonder what Jesus thought about all this. It's come as no surprise that Jesus made arrangements to provide for these unfortunates and went unrecorded. Indeed, it was an awkward situation for Mark.

From this point on or after Jesus left the synagogue, Jesus knew he would count on having little privacy which forced him to go to some extremes simply to be left alone. He must have realized this beforehand, but it didn't really sink in until after his exposure to the crowds, most of whom were struggling to get by on a daily basis. We can assume that a number of people had followed Jesus from the synagogue to Simon's house, got word of his mother-in-law being cured and hence brought there those who were sick and possessed with demons. As for the latter, the verb is *daimonizomai* where the noun *daimon* or demon is part of the word. Note the time of day given in two forms, evening and sundown. This twilight period is a time heralding the appearance of demons and other such spiritual entities that remain hidden during the day. They begin making their appearance in the half light or when the sun has set and its rays are not directly visible. Thus the demons were most vulnerable during evening twilight. It was perfect time for Jesus to cast them from persons so afflicted.

The peasant population was fully aware of this which is why vs. 33 beginning with *kai* #24 has the entire city of Capernaum at the door of the house of Simon and Andrew, the two being known by most of the inhabitants. Jesus had to work quickly during this brief twilight period. And so he cured many, cast out demons and wouldn't allow them to speak. The reason? Vs. 34 (*kai* #25) says that these demons knew Jesus, *oida* + also to be acquainted with. If they could, the demons would claim that Jesus was working on their behalf. And so the people would get word of this and shun Jesus as well as those associated with him.

Vs. 35 (*kai* #26) speaks of early morning, *proi* indicative of a considerable time before daybreak stressed even further by the adverb *lian* as exceedingly which is pretty much complete darkness. Jesus decided it was time for him to be alone, so by leaving well be-

fore dawn he was gone before anyone knew about it. This is the second lonely place or *eremos* +, the first in vs. 12 when Jesus was there for a total of forty days. In the situation at hand the text says that there he had prayed, *proseuchomai* usually as to make petition with *pros-* (directly towards-which) emphasizing this.

Obviously this time to be alone didn't last long, for vs. 36 (*kai* #27) has Simon and those with him—most likely his brother plus James and John and perhaps a few other hangers-on—pursue Jesus. The verb *dioko* or is emphasized considerable by the preposition *kata-* here as down (*katadioko*), almost as to hunt Jesus down. Vs. 37 (*kai* # 28) has these men finding Jesus which implies that they split up and ransacked every nook and cranny of the deserted area. Nevertheless, they had to wait for first light in order to do this. Upon finding Jesus right away they said that everyone was searching for him. This was true to a certain extent but more to cover their intense and sometimes over-dependent reliance upon Jesus.

After having been found, Jesus gives no response as to why he went to this deserted place (vs. 38, *kai* #29). He was focused more upon moving on, of going to the next towns to preach there as well, *kerusso* +. This was an indirect message to his potential disciples that he has to keep moving, that his teaching will be entrusted to them even if they didn't realize it at the time. He hoped just by accompanying him they'd realize this. Surely his words as to why he had come (*exerchomai*, to come from) resounded in their ears well into the future. As for those places Jesus said he wanted to visit and preach, they were located throughout all Galilee. There (vs. 39, *kai* #30) Jesus preached (*kerusso* +) in the local synagogues and cast out demons, *ekballo* and *daimon*, both +.

In vs. 40 (*kai* #31) a leper approached (*erchomai* with *pros*) Jesus first beseeching and then kneeling before him: *parakaleo* or to summon beside (*para-*)and *gonupeteo*. Jesus must have been struck by the polite, restrained way this man presented his petition: “if you will” or if you want. He left it entirely up to Jesus to make him clean, *katharizo*. Jesus responds at once, being moved with pity (*kai* # 32 in vs. 41), *splagchnizo* more like being moved in one's bowels, this word being part of the verb at hand. As for Jesus stretching forth his hand, chances are he did it at once in great eagerness, after which he touched the leper, *hupto* also as to lay hold of. This, of course, must have horrified anyone looking on because to touch a leper means a guaranteed death sentence. As for Jesus' statement “I will” (*thelo*) to the leper's deference, it pretty much equals his *splagchnizo*.

Vs. 42 (*kai* #33 and *euthus*) reflects the situation at hand, notably the leper's attitude which has so moved Jesus. One can't help but wonder what happened to such people Jesus had cured. How did they adapt to normal life? Did some if not all follow Jesus? If they didn't follow him as in most instances, some must have kept tabs on his activity all the way to his death and beyond. However, given human nature, chances are most simply forgot him and moved on with their lives.

As for the leper, in vs. 43 (*kai* #34) Jesus' attitude turned quickly which must have sur-

prised the cured man. He not only charged him, he dismissed him at once, another use of *euthus*. The first verb *embrimaomai* is very strong, more along the lines of censuring. We don't know precisely what was involved, but Jesus must have seen that the cured leper was set upon broadcasting the event. Who could blame him? Jesus knew this would happen, and perhaps was wishing against all hope that news about the cure wouldn't happen. While Jesus would continue to cure people, this attitude to deflect praise and recognition could reflect his desire more to teach and reveal himself in this way as opposed to having people rely upon the performance of miracles.

Vs. 44 (*kai* #35) reveals Jesus' *embrimaomai* as in the previous verse, the one at hand being a continuation joined with it by the conjunctive. Another hint at perhaps the secondary nature of this cure or miracle compared with any teaching is that Jesus is concerned with complying to the *Torah*. He bids the cured leper to show himself to the priest and make an offering in accord with what Moses had commanded. This will be an official proof, if you will, for the people. The word for this is *marturion* or witness with the preposition *eis* or into. In sum, *marturion* is a public declaration or acknowledgment. Reference to all this is Lev 14.2-32. Though provision is made for a cure, it seems that such an event is rare...extremely so...because leprosy is almost fatal. To be cured of it was close to impossible.

As for the priest, indeed he will be in for a shock and will demand to have witnesses come and testify that the man before him indeed had been afflicted with leprosy. He took great pains because he must have run into some charlatans during his ministry. It's almost too good to be true. Once his doubts were out of the way, he must have been dying to know how this cure came about. After learning it was Jesus, perhaps he decided to follow him or if not, to closely watch his activity.

Chapter One concludes with a summary of where Jesus stands as far as we've come to know him as presented by St. Mark. As for the cured leper, he to engaged in *kerusso* + or preaching about what had happened to him. Also note the verb *diaphemizo* or to spread word about Jesus, the preposition *dia-* or through prefaced to the root along with *logos*, word-as-expression.

The verse continues with what seems a hindrance, namely, that this prevented Jesus from entering any town. He was compelled to remain in the country which basically means he had to stay outdoors. However, people made their way to see Jesus. In a way this hindrance turned out to be an advantage. Jesus could move more freely or better, had more opportunities to escape when he wanted to do so. As for the country of vs 45, it's the plural of *eremos* + with the preposition *epi*, literally "upon the deserts." How long this forced separation lasts isn't given, but Chapter Two begins with Jesus having returned to Capernaum.

Chapter One has a total of thirty-five verses beginning with the conjunctive *kai*.

Chapter Two

In typical fashion, Mark begins a new chapter with the conjunctive *kai* (#36-1) ⁶ which swiftly moves the reader to Jesus having cleansed a leper after he had returned to Capernaum. As for the time span of “after some days,” the text reads literally “through days.” It’s interesting the way vs. 1 concludes. Jesus isn’t at home but as having been heard or reported as being at home. This added touch intimates the tight-knit society of the time when people kept a close eye on each other for better or for worse, Jesus being no exception. As for being at home, it’s up to our imagination to wonder what it was like. He had been a carpenter and made a modest but better income than most people, so chances are his home was somewhat better than other dwellings. Also it’s helpful to keep in mind that Jesus had recently begun his ministry, had moved from Nazareth, so this house was either rather new or a place he had spent time fixing up to make it more livable. Nothing is said about his parents being there.

Apparently Jesus used this home (*oikos* also as house, dwelling) pretty much as a place to flop, being on the road so often. Surely he must have left it in charge of trusted friends or hired help so people wouldn’t ransack it for souvenirs or the like. Already he had established himself as someone who could cure people of diseases. In the situation at hand so many people had gathered about Jesus’ home that vs. 2 which begins with *kai* (#37-2) says there wasn’t even room for them, let alone those who were at his door. Nevertheless, the second part of vs. 2 says that Jesus was preaching the word to them, *laleo* commonly meaning to speak compared, for example, with *kerusso* as in 1.38. The object of *laleo* is the word or *logos* + which at this stage is rather loosely defined. It suggests that Jesus was carrying on a conversation with the crowd, more along a give-and-take characterized by a certain familiarity.

Vs. 3 (*kai* #38-3) has one of the most dramatic instances of all four Gospels, four men bringing a paralytic on a litter to Jesus’ house but found the crowds prevented their entry. They were so desperate in being unable to approach Jesus that they resorted to climbing on the roof of the house (*kai* #39-4 of vs. 4), making a hole and lowering the paralytic inside. Obviously this got everyone’s attention. The situation was chaotic beyond belief. Jesus was too astounded at the four men hacking away to tell them to stop. Chances are that they told him they’d repair the roof right away after which they lowered their friend down into the house. However, for the moment they remained on the roof figuring that from that vantage point they could get a good idea of what would happen next.

Obviously the four men were taking a huge gamble. Fortunately Jesus remained unperturbed even as he heard the loud banging just above him. Besides, as noted above, Jesus

⁶ Starting with this chapter we have listed both the number of times *kai* occurs in an accumulative fashion and in a given chapter.

used this house more a way station, nothing terribly permanent, perhaps situated on the outskirts of Capernaum. This location would offer a discreet way of coming and going without attracting too much attention. Vs. 5 (*kai* #40-5) has Jesus seeing the faith of these four men, especially the expression on their faces as they lowered the paralytic down. Once there Jesus said to the paralytic that his sins are forgiven, *aphiemi* also as to release. The four men and others inside the house must have been disappointed, hoping Jesus would cure him on the spot. The same with the four on the roof who asked among themselves whether their desperate action was worth it.

Vs. 6 has some of the local scribes within Jesus' house who questioned silently in their hearts (*kardia* as seat of physical, spiritual and mental life) as to why Jesus forgave the sins of the paralytic. Why they were present isn't stated. Perhaps they heard about Jesus and wanted to check him out. Being respected in the community, Jesus felt it best to invite them even though he knew what they were about. The verb *dialogizomai* fits the bill nicely with regard to the scribes' attitude and reveals their over-the-top devotion to *Torah*. In sum the verb suggests that their hearts were running wild with all sorts of speculation, of how to trip up Jesus. Even the slightest questioning as to their beliefs was enough to set them off. As for the dramatic entrance of the paralytic through the roof, their inability to be moved showed their focus was miles away. Surely the four men noticed this and could face trouble later on.

Then in vs. 7 the scribes blurted out a question as to why Jesus was speaking as he did. They didn't simply say it but practically shouted it for all to hear. Then follows a second sentence within this same verse, namely, that Jesus was blaspheming or *blasphemeo* also as to speak in an unbecoming manner. Next follows a second question, again intended for all to hear. Only God is able to forgive (*aphiemi* +) sins. Jesus didn't let this go by for a second. In vs. 8 (*kai* #41-6) along with *euthus* or immediately Jesus perceives in his spirit (*epiginosko*, literally as to know upon, *epi-* with *pneuma* +) that these scribes were questioning within themselves, *dialogizomai* +.

This tension between Jesus and the scribes couldn't remain unresolved for long. He asked why are they behaving in such an unbecoming manner followed by a challenge in vs. 9. Jesus offers the scribes a choice with regard to the paralytic who, after all, was laying on his pallet looking up at this squabble he and his friends were responsible for having provoked. At the same time he looked up at these friends on the roof who had equally puzzled expressions on their faces. And so the question between Jesus and the scribes centered around which is easier, to forgive sins or to rise and walk. To this only one word suited the situation. Silence.

Vs. 10 has Jesus continuing to address the scribes, the paralytic and his four companions the source of this encounter but who quickly have become secondary players. Jesus speaks of himself as a third person, son of man, who has authority or *exousia* to forgive sins, *aphiemi*, both +. This, of course, is in direct response to the scribes claiming that only God can carry through on such an action. One can't but help wonder what the para-

lytic thought of all this, he being in the center of the controversy and literally having been dropped in on it.

Right after this rebuke Jesus imparts a threefold command to the paralytic: rise, take his pallet and go home. The man did just that in vs. 12 which begins with *kai* (#42-7) and *euthus*. Mark omits whether or not he lingered long enough to thank Jesus, though we can assume that the men on the roof wanted to get off there as quickly as possible. After all, they were the center of attention of the crowd pressing in on Jesus' home, many wishing that they had thought of that trick earlier. Surely they had plenty to talk about on the way home as well as once they got there. It'd come as no surprise that the man kept the pallet as a kind of keepsake. Perhaps he even decided to sell parts of it as keepsakes.

This dramatic incident comes to a conclusion in vs. 12 when Mark observes that all present were amazed and glorified God, *existemi* and *doxazo*. The former consists of the verbal root *histemi* or to stand prefaced with the preposition *ex-* or from, to stand-from and the latter, alternately as to praise, to extol. They simply blurted out the obvious. Never have they seen anything like what had just happened. We can presume that the scribes felt the same equally but did their very best to conceal their response. Now for the practical question at hand. Who will repair the roof? Hopefully the four men responsible for making it.

In vs. 13 (*kai* #43-8) Jesus moves on but not very far, that is, he returns to the Sea of Galilee. As expected, he was followed by a crowd which gathered around him after which he began to teach, *didasko* +. As for this crowd or *ochlos*, note that it was *pros* Jesus, this preposition indicative of direction towards-which, that the people were right on top of him. Mark doesn't mention Jesus getting in a boat which possibly was the case.

Shortly afterwards in vs. 14 (*kai* #44-9) Jesus saw Levi ⁷ sitting at the tax office, this perhaps being a portable one set up by the water's edge so as to collect taxes from the fishermen. Indeed, it was indicative of Roman thoroughness. Without any introduction or the like Jesus simply tells Levi to follow him which is precisely what happened. Chances are that Levi felt relieved of an undue burden, that is, collecting taxes for Rome and being essentially ostracized from society by his fellow Jews. In other words, he was a kind of traitor and barely tolerated in the local community. Some if not many of those whom Jesus had just taught must have been puzzled when he summoned Levi. Did Levi at last see the light they wondered, or was Jesus somehow siding with what this man represented, an agent of Rome? It was all quite confusing. Don't forget too that this was a tight-knit community of peasant farmers and fishermen, so word spread quickly as well as being subject to distortion and exaggeration.

Vs. 15 (*kai* #45-10) has "he" sitting at table in his house which must refer to Jesus' house

⁷ A footnote in the RSV says "Mark does not identify him with Matthew the apostle; cf. Mt 9.9."

hopefully now with a repaired roof. The verb is *sunanakeimai*, the root *keimai* or to lie prefaced with the prepositions *sun-* and *ana-*, with and upon; i.e., to recline as for a meal. He was there with a whole bunch of tax collectors, undoubtedly associates of Levi who must have wondered why their fellow worker got up so quickly and followed Jesus. Some may have considered reporting him to the Roman authorities for forsaking his post. Still, this sudden abandonment remains a mystery. Also included were Jesus' disciples or *mathetes*, the definition of which being who engages in learning through instruction from another such as a pupil or apprentice. This actually is the first time *mathetes* appears in Mark's Gospel.

Vs. 16 (*kai* #46-11) mentions scribes who may be the same as noted in vs. 6 but here are specified as being associated with the Pharisees. Chances are they weren't invited into Jesus' home after the tense encounter with the paralytic. Still, they followed Jesus (hounding him might be more appropriate) and ask his disciples why he's eating with tax collectors and sinners. The latter may be friends associated with Levi, they curious as to his association with this perfect stranger. Note that the scribes don't approach Jesus directly. They put forth their question indirectly and thus in a safe manner using his disciples as intermediaries. Also note the wording in vs. 16, they "said" or *lego*. The scribes had no intent of asking a legitimate question. They were focused upon an already completed judgment with regard to what Jesus was doing.

In vs. 17 (*kai* #47-12) Jesus hears of the commotion with the Pharisees, he remarked that those who are well don't require the attendance of a physician; rather, the sick have such a need which reads literally "having evil," *kakos* being the adverb which here pertains to poor health. Jesus continues by saying that he didn't call the righteous or *dikaioi* but sinners. When Levi hears Jesus speaking as such it must have reminded him as having been called from his tax office. And so we have a motley group of what may be called sinners or despised tax collectors and their hangers-on within Jesus' house and the Pharisees outside. Which in reality was worse? It must have been an interesting situation, the disciples being caught in between and not having a real clue as to what was transpiring.

Vs. 18 (*kai* #48-13) begins with the conjunctive rendered as now." Apparently it was common knowledge that the disciples of John the Baptist engaged in fasting, that is, simply following the example of their master. This information having come from the relatively large amount of people who had been baptized by John at the Jordan River. They formed a tightly knit band which offered an example of how to live a life of repentance preached by their master. Then we have the Pharisees doing the same, that being known to all because it was done for the sake of making a show.

This prompted a good number of people to approach Jesus and ask why his disciples didn't do the same. We can assume that by now most locals knew Jesus had been baptized John. Not only that, the two men were cousins and just about everyone knew the two sets of brothers accompanying Jesus along with others called disciples (cf. vs. 15). Fortunately for Jesus these were everyday people, not scribes who could use this as a

means to trick Jesus. He then decides to throw out a rhetorical question based on everyday life. It isn't customary for wedding guests to fast as long as the bridegroom is present (cf. vs. 19, *kai* #49-14). No mention here is made of the bride who in the context is implied. No question. Everyone could understand what Jesus was saying.

In vs. 20 Jesus speaks of coming days when the bridegroom is taken away, *apairo* also as to go on a journey. This will be a real occasion to fast but in the hope that the bridegroom will return to his bride. Jesus doesn't give the slightest clue as to why this will happen. It leads to two examples common to everyone. The first deals with sewing a piece of cloth which hasn't be shrunk onto an old garment, a familiar example for those listening to Jesus who lived pretty much on the poverty level. The same applies to new wine into old wineskins (cf. vs. 22, *kai* #50-15). And so these two examples from daily living help illumine what Jesus meant by the bridegroom being snatched away.

In vs. 23 we have *kai* #51-16 which goes untranslated. Jesus and his disciples—again this term still remains somewhat vague and ill-defined—were walking through a field of grain. These followers simply plucked the grain while walking, barely attentive to what they were doing because their attention was fixed on Jesus teaching them. Some like Levi must have wondered why they continued to be with Jesus who seemed to be dragging them aimlessly around the local countryside. Then in vs. 24 (*kai* #52-17) we have the first appearance of the Pharisees though vs. 16 mentions “scribes of Pharisees.” For them to make an appearance suggests that some of the locals were uneasy about Jesus' preaching and healing. They wanted authoritative representatives, possibly summoned from Jerusalem, to come and check things out. They did so, following Jesus and those associated with him but at a healthy distance. The example at hand reveals the pettiness and concern for legal observance which made them famous (or infamous). They spotted the disciples picking grain which was illegal on the Sabbath. The basis for this accusation is Dt 23.25: “When you go into your neighbor's standing grain, you may pluck the ears with your hand, but you shall not put a sickle to your neighbor's standing grain.”

Anyone with a bit of common sense and acquaintance with Torah could see the absurdity of this claim. However, it opened the Pharisees up for a direct hit coming from Jesus who gave the example of David and those with him who were hungry (cf. vs. 25, *kai* #53-18). He didn't pluck grain but did something far more radical. He entered God's house (*oikos* here as temple) and ate the showbread which only the priests could consume. The example is found in 1Sam 21.1-6. There the priest Ahimelech readily consented to give David and those with him what vs. 4 calls holy bread, *qodesh* implying that which is set apart. In vs. 6 it's called bread of the Presence, *lechem-hapanym* or literally “of the faces.” This has two references, Lev 24.5-9 and Ex 25.23-30. In the former such bread is reserved for Aaron and his sons whereas in the latter we have a description of the table, etc., for it. Vs. 30 of this second passage reads “And you shall set the bread of the *panym* on the table *lepanay* (before me).” In other words, two uses of the same word with respect to the notion of face.

Vs. 27 (*kai* #54-19) concludes Chapter Two with the memorable words that the Sabbath is made for man, not the other way around. And so the Son of man is lord (*kurios*) of the Sabbath. The Pharisees were familiar with this title which Jesus used in vs. 10, that most likely being one of the things that had upset so many people. To them Jesus was walking around as though he were the Lord, a blasphemy of the worst kind.

Chapter Two has a total of nineteen verses beginning with the conjunctive *kai*.

Chapter Three

Kai (#55-1) begins this chapter rendered as “again” where Jesus enters the synagogue, most likely the same one at Capernaum noted in 1.21 though the place isn’t specified. This time he encountered a man with a withered hand, certainly nothing as dramatic as the one with an unclean spirit. The time between the two visits isn’t given which infers there must have been several intervening Sabbaths. The way this man is presented doesn’t suggest he was intentionally waiting for Jesus, just that he was a regular attendee. Given the primitive medical care of the time plus other dreadful afflictions, having a withered hand didn’t seem terribly bad.

By now every move of Jesus was being watched like a hawk, vs. 2 (*kai* #56-2) saying that everyone had their gaze fixed upon him. The verb *paratereo* conveys this where the preposition *para-* connotes being beside and thus suggests a more intense form of observation. “They” isn’t specified. The context is whether Jesus would heal the man on the Sabbath, something both the scribes and Pharisees would love to use against him. The situation implies that everyone was doing *paratereo*. Perhaps the congregation had been covered by these religious authorities to fall in line which presumably they did simply out of fear. After all, they were peasants and essentially were powerless. And so we have a unique tense situation where everyone in the synagogue had their eyes peeled on everyone else. As vs. 2 puts it, attention was not only upon Jesus but the Pharisees to see what pretense they’d devise to accuse him, *kategoreo* also to bring a charge against someone, the preposition *kata-* fundamentally as down.

Without batting an eye in vs. 3 (*kai* #57-3) Jesus recognized the man with the withered hand and told him to draw near. However, before making a move, Jesus asked everyone present if it’s lawful to do good or harm on the Sabbath, *exesti* (vs. 4, *kai* #58-4). The verb *poieo* (to do, to make) is used with *agathos* + or good and is prefaced by the adjective *kakos* +, to do evil. The same verse has another sentence saying simply that everyone was silent, *siopao*.

In vs. 5 which begins with *kai* (#59-5) Jesus not only looks around (*periblepo*) at all in the synagogue but does so with anger on his face, *orge* being a strong word also as showing displeasure. The man’s withered hand seemed somewhat incidental compared with the hardness of heart displayed by everyone, *porosis* also as dullness, insensibility with re-

gard to the collective *kardia* +. This couldn't but grieve Jesus, the verb being *sullupeiō*. Jesus wondered if the scribes had brow-beaten everyone in the synagogue. It sure came across as such. Anyway, it was a kind of wake-up call for him, in a real way foretelling the opposition he'll face later on.

It took a bit for Jesus to recover from this which must have come as a shock. Nevertheless, when he had driven out the unclean spirit, "they were all amazed" [1.27]. Now he decided to go ahead and cure the man, asking him in vs. 5 to extend his hand. At once it was restored, *apokathistemi* consisting of the verbal root *histemi* (to stand, to place) prefaced with two prepositions, *apo-* and *kata-* or from and here according to.

Vs. 6 begins with the conjunctive *kai* (#60-6) which goes untranslated and clarifies the question related to vs. 2 where "they" seems to include all present in the synagogue. That is to say, the verse at hand specifically mentions Pharisees who exit at once (*euthus*) along with the Herodians⁸ and held counsel (*sumboulion*) against Jesus. In sum, they didn't simply wish to kill him but to destroy him, *apollumi* + meaning to utterly wipe out. Indeed, the collective *apollumi* is reflected in the *porosis* or hardness of heart mentioned in vs. 5. You could say the reason for this hostility in large part is jealousy and fear on part of the religious authorities that the people would question their authority.

Vs. 7 begins with the conjunctive *kai* (#61-7) which goes untranslated and has Jesus leaving the synagogue at once due to the hostile encounter with the Pharisees. He heads for the Sea of Galilee, familiar territory to the two sets of brothers who most likely knew where they could safely take refuge. Nevertheless, a great multitude tagged along, *plethos* meaning a large number compared with the more rowdy *ochlos* of 2.13. If this wasn't bad enough, vs. 8 (*kai* #62-8) recounts that even more came from beyond the Jordan, Tyre and Sidon similarly described as *plethos*. These are described as having gotten word of what Jesus had done. We can pretty much assume that some of the Pharisees joined in simply to keep an eye on Jesus' activities. Though the text says nothing, it must have bothered Jesus as to why he was subjected to such unfavorable scrutiny. It must have been worse for those close to him. In fact, even at this early stage it's to their credit that they didn't abandon him outrightly.

In vs 9 (*kai* #63-9) Jesus does some fast thinking. He asked his disciples—almost always they're designated as such instead of individually by name which portends the nature of their apostolic office—to procure a boat so that he might address the crowds from off shore. This would be easy, for Andrew, Simon, James and John were fishermen who would have access to a boat not being used which belonged to their former colleagues. It was quite a scene with Jesus in danger of being crushed, *thlibo* also as to restrict due to the *ochlos* +, not *plethos*. The reason for the drama at hand was obvious. Jesus had cured quite a large number of people which meant that word spread like wildfire. As vs. 10 puts it, everyone simply wanted to touch Jesus (*haptō* +), not that he heal them directly.

⁸ A sect of Hellenic Jews.

In addition to the *ochlos*, vs. 11 (*kai* #64-10) adds unclean spirits which cried out that he was the Son of God. Though this would astonish people nearby, in reality it comes as no surprise. By reason of their constitution such spirits or *pneuma* + could easily recognize Jesus' true nature. I.e., they were unobstructed by physical bodies. Jesus recognized that these spirits weren't limited by space nor time which is why he ordered them not to speak about him, (*kai* #65-11) of vs. 12, the verb being *epitimaō* +. As for the essence of this command, refer to 1.34 where Jesus forbade them "to speak because they knew him." A footnote in the NIV says, "the time for revealing Jesus' identity had not yet come, and demons were hardly the proper channel for such disclosure."

In vs. 13 (*kai* #66-12) Jesus ascends a mountain which goes unidentified for the purpose of calling those whom he desired (*thelo* + also to wish) after which they came to him. Note two uses of the preposition *pros* indicative of direction towards-which: prefaced to the verb *kaleo* or *proskaleo* and free standing, "to him." The way this verse is presented suggests that at first Jesus was alone on the mountaintop. From there his voice resounded not so much in a physical manner but deep within each disciple which then bade them to ascend.

Next in vs. 14 (*kai* #67-13) Jesus appoints twelve, the verb *poieo* + being used, to make. The critical text has in parentheses "whom he named apostles" followed by words which come across as quite appealing, "to be with him." This gesture suggests that the Simon, Andrew, James and John who had been with him were at this point not identified as apostles, *apostolos* + which may be defined as one who had been sent. Actually what follows in vs. 12 is that the designated twelve are to be dispatched (*apostello*) in order to preach or *kerusso* which is in line with what he said in 1.38: "that I may preach there also; for that is why I came out." And so the apostolic *apostello* is to reflect Jesus' *exerchomai* or his coming-from (*ex-*) mentioned in that verse.

Vs. 15 is a continuation of the previous verse joined to it with the conjunctive *kai* (#68-14) and continues Jesus' delegation of authority or *exousia* + to cast out demons. It's hard to imagine what the twelve thought about this; they must have considered themselves as almost semi-divine yet at the same time not knowing how to exercise such authority. It'd come as no surprise they discussed this at some length among themselves when apart from Jesus. Then in rapid succession from vs. 16 through vs. 19 Jesus names the twelve, the two sets of brothers being included. Note that these verses being respectively with the conjunctive *kai*: #69-15, #70-16, #71-17 and #72-18.

That was it. Simply put and nothing more, typical of Mark's style. As for those who had ascended the mountain with Jesus and who hadn't been designated as apostles, chances are some fell away and went home, having felt rejected while others continued to follow him. Vs. 19 continues with the words "And then he went home," hopefully by now this home having the hole in the roof repaired. According to the critical Greek text this is mentioned briefly in vs. 20 which begins with *kai* (#73-19). Right after it comes vs. 21 (*kai*

#74-20)...part of the previous verse...where the crowd or *ochlos* + came together at Jesus' house which by now had become a kind of pilgrimage site. The text puts this crowd pressing in in vivid terms saying that Jesus couldn't even eat.

Vs. 21 (*kai* #74-20) speaks of Jesus' friends which is rendered literally as "those by him," *hoi par' autou* with the preposition *para* usually as beside or nearby. In the case at hand *para* intimates varying degrees of intimacy. These good people "went out" or *exerchomai* + to seize him or *krateo* also as to take hold of. Apparently they were concerned for Jesus' well being. Their *exerchomai* doesn't seem to pertain to exiting the house but represents an assessment of how desperate their opinion was about Jesus. Word got back about Jesus being hemmed in by so many people and rumors that were flying this way and that, namely, that Jesus was "beside himself," *existemi* +. In other words, they feared both for his safety and well-being though the text doesn't give details about the matter. Perhaps these good people were influenced by rumors spread from the scribes and Pharisees, though it's difficult to tell.

If that wasn't bad enough, in vs. 22 (*kai* #75-21) the scribes who came all the way from Jerusalem chimed in. They seem to be different from the local ones mentioned in 2.6 which means the religious authorities were beginning to take closer notice of Jesus. On what seems to be the basis of pure hearsay they make the wild claim that Jesus is possessed by Beelzebul⁹ a statement in its simplicity being even more damning, namely, that "he has (*echo*) Beelzebul." These scribes didn't come from Jerusalem just now; most likely they were sent some time ago at the instigation of the local scribes and had a field day concocting all sorts of rumors about Jesus. They also claimed that Jesus was casting out (*ekballo* and *daimon*, both +) demons literally "in the prince of demons." And so we have what seems to be close associates or family members of Jesus who were influenced by the scribes from Jerusalem, the former either being silent out of fear or having been intimidated in one way or another.

In vs. 23 (*kai* #76-22) Jesus calls these scribes to him, the preposition *pros-* prefaced to *kaleo* suggesting he just about picked them up and set them right in front of him, this in the context of the pressing crowd mentioned in vs. 20. Obviously such a gesture made them very uneasy. Was Jesus going to cast out demons from the scribes, they knowing very well that they were the ones who were possessed or if not, pretty close to it? Now Jesus started to speak in parables, an easy yet direct way of presenting himself not just to those before him but to others in and around the house.

After asking rhetorically in vs. 23 how Satan can cast himself out, in vs. 24 (*kai* #77-23 but not translated) Jesus puts this in another way, that is, a kingdom which is divided cannot stand, the two contrasting verbs being *merizo* and *histemi* +. Then in vs. 26 (*kai* #78-24) Jesus returns to the example of Satan who if he had risen up against himself, would be divided and not able to stand, *merizo* and *histemi* again, both +. Not only that,

⁹ Another name for Satan.

he's destined to come to an end, the verb *echo* + or to have with the noun *telos* or completion, cessation. In other words, Satan's time is limited just as with the scribes.

Jesus continues addressing the scribes in vs. 27¹⁰ as to the need to bind a strong man before plundering his house, this hitting the mark since all present were in Jesus' home. And so the scribes could be taken as the would-be plunderers but were unsuccessful, the verb being *diaprazo* more along the lines of thoroughly ransacking signified by the preposition *dia-* or through. As for the binding or *deo*, this can represent the scribes' attempt to trip up Jesus, his *skeue* or goods within the house literally as vessels containing the truth.

Vs. 28 brings this confrontation to a conclusion, albeit a temporary one, since the scribes had no intent on relenting. Jesus begins his words with *amen* or truly, a way of both bringing to an end his words as well as giving warning. It's coupled with the equally weighty "I say to you." Both all sins and blasphemies will be forgiven (*aphiemi* +) with one major exception. That consists of blasphemies literally "into the Holy Spirit." Jesus makes this clear by adding that such a person never (*ouk*, generally as 'not') has forgiveness. Rather, he's guilty of a sin which is eternal, *enochos* also as liable and needing to give an account. *Aionios* is the adjective for eternal also as a very long time. Both it as well as the verb *blasphemeo* + as pertaining to the Spirit or *Pneuma* + are largely based upon a pride and arrogance that goes unacknowledged. As for *blasphemo*, again it means to speak in an unbecoming manner and thus deliberately ignoring the dignity of anyone involved. Compare this with the *blasphemo* uttered otherwise; by comparison there's no problem with the former.

These words of Jesus which convey an absolute sense have their source in the Jerusalem scribes claiming that he has a *pneuma* which is *akathartos*, both +. To say that this *pneuma* is unclean is a kind of inversion of the *Pneuma* which is *hagios* or holy. Thus Jesus can speak as he had done, frightful as it is yet beyond the scope of the scribes to understand it at the moment. Chances are most went ahead unchanged though there's the possibility that some the scribes had a change of heart. The record, of course, is silent on the matter.

Vs. 31 (*kai* #79-25) has both Jesus' mother and brethren coming who stood outside his house, *adelphos* for the latter, usually as brother but also indicative of close affinity. One example, I guess, could be John the Baptist, the two being cousins. Presumably they heard of Jesus' activity and were troubled by his relationship with the scribes and Pharisees. The situation was of course in the context of the *ochlos* + first mentioned in vs 20, so thick that it was impossible for Jesus and those with him to eat. Jesus' response in vs. 32 (*kai* #80-26) was that this *ochlos* comprised his mother and brethren, the same two terms in the previous verse. He defines this relationship in terms of doing the will of

¹⁰A side note, if you will. Vss. 27-30 do not have the conjunctive *kai*, unusual. Then again, the text moves along so quickly and definitively that you could say there's no need of it.

God, *thelema*. And so in addition to being Jesus' brother and mother he adds sister. Such is the miracle that had taken place.

And so ends Chapter Three on an unresolved note. The rather undesirable term *ochlos* is transformed into the most intimate of family relationships. We have no ideas how the real mother and real brethren of Jesus responded to this reversal of roles. Keep in mind that they had been waiting outside his house whereas the ones designated as brother, sister and mother are inside the house.

Chapter Three has a total of twenty-six verses beginning with the conjunctive *kai*.

Chapter Four

No surprise that a new chapter begins with the conjunctive *kai* (#81-1) which here goes untranslated and is accompanied with *palin* rendered as "again." The two words serve to bring one's attention to what is being communicated, that is, Jesus beginning to teach beside the sea, *didasko* + here usually associated with *Torah* though we have no specifics. Note the addition of *archo* rendered as "he began" which is tied in with *kai* and *palin* inferring that Jesus continued what he had begun. For this refer to 2.13: "He went out again beside the sea...and he taught them." In that instance *kai* is inserted but goes untranslated.

Vs. 1 contains a second full sentence, that a very large crowd gathered about Jesus, *sunago* where *sun-* equals "with" including the preposition *pros* which is indicative that people were pressing in upon Jesus. *Pleistos* is the adjective modifying *ochlos* + or crowd, that is, most or very much. This compelled Jesus to get into a boat, again borrowing one from one of the two sets of brothers or from one of their associates and going offshore to address those on the shore. Jesus had learned this was the best approach because the flatness of the water helped project his voice better than if he were speaking on land.

Apparently Jesus was teaching a fairly long time, vs. 2 (*kai* #82-2) saying that he had made considerable use of parables. He preferred one pertaining to sowing (*speiro*) and began with a call to pay attention, "listen" or *akouo* which begins vs. 3. Contrast this with Jesus being on the water; at first you'd think he would have used something pertinent to fishing but did not because despite proximity to the Sea of Galilee, most of the people were farmers or the like. As for one of the parables (the nature of the others not given), it's divided into five parts, if you will, and is outlined as follows. Upon completion, Jesus utters a cautionary note. It's necessary to hear (*akouo* +) provided one has ears. In a way this is more difficult because chances are relatively high the fifth option won't pan out, something of which Jesus was clearly aware. While the sower most likely had a plan in mind, the way he goes about his job gives the impression that he was casually dropping seed as he walked along:

1) Vs. 4 (*kai* #83-3) or along the path or *hodos* +, *para* also as beside. Birds quickly came and ate them before they could take root. It'd come as no surprise that these birds saw a free meal being provided and decided to follow the sower for more.

2) Vs. 5 begins with *kai* (#84-4) which goes untranslated where seed fell on rocky ground which naturally had little soil. Because of this immediately (*euthus*) it sprang up.

3) Vs. 6 is a continuation of the previous verse (*kai* #85-5) and conveys the same immediacy as to why the plant died: scorched by the sun due to little or no roots.

4) Vs. 7 begins with *kai* (#86-6) but is not translated and speaks of other seed. These were choked by thorns and thus failed to yield grain.

5) Vs. 8 begins with *kai* #87-7 and at last mentions good soil (*kalos* + alternately as beautiful) which enabled the seed to produce an abundance of grain.

Jesus finishes teaching “many things in parables” [vs. 2], the one about seeds having been singled out. He both warns and exhorts those present in vs. 9 (*kai* #88-8) to hear provided they have ears...the capacity...to listen. Now in vs. 10 (*kai* #89-9) Jesus is presented as being alone but was accompanied by the twelve and those “about (*peri*, around) him.” As for the latter, they seem to be more serious followers of Jesus and can include a significant retinue of women who ministered to both his needs as well as the twelve. All were intrigued by the parable just delineated and wanted Jesus to flesh it out, this taking place perhaps further off shore to avoid being pressed by the crowd.

Before acquiescing to the crowd's request—Jesus knew he had to expand the parable to these future founders of churches—he felt the need to boost their confidence in vs. 11 (*kai* #90-10). For this reason he said that already they've been given the secret belonging to the kingdom of God, *musterion* pertaining to what is secret and not generally known. Usually it involves a teaching or a presentation as in the case at hand which is fuller than the parable in and by itself. *Musterion* applied to a divine kingdom narrows it down a bit further. That is to say, an element of rule and order are involved. In contrast to this Jesus continues in the same verse speaking of those who are outside (*echo*) presumably this kingdom yet have the potential of becoming subjects to it. At the same time they still have need for parables. It will be up to the twelve at hand and others present with them to expound upon Jesus' parables at a later time or after Pentecost.

Vs. 12 continues as part of the previous verse essentially quoting Is 6.9-10, this being the first quote from the Hebrew scriptures in Mark's Gospel. Here we have his version followed by the original. Notes are to be inserted with regard to both:

“so that they may indeed see but not perceive and may indeed hear but not understand; lest they should turn again and be forgiven.” This verse implies continuing from what just came before it, hence the lower case of “so.” It contains three pairs, if you will:

1) *Blepo* and *horaō* which are relative to sight, the former as to have the power of sight and the latter more along the lines as to catch sight of, to notice.

2) *Akouo* + and *sunimi*, the former as to hear in the physical sense and

the latter to hear followed by taking action upon what had been heard. *Suniemi* literally as to stand with (*histemi* prefaced with *sun-*).

3) *Epistrepho* and *aphiemi* +, the former as to turn upon (*epi-*) and the latter also as to release, to let go.

“And he said, ‘Go and say to this people: “Hear and hear but do not understand; see and see but do not perceive.” Make the heart of this people fat and their ears heavy and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their hearts’ and turn and be healed.” Isaiah pretty much knew in advance what the Lord was going to ask of him, so the words that follow here and through the rest of Chapter Six come as no surprise painful as they are. The words “this people” have a slightly veiled contempt. Note the double use of hear (*shamah*) with respect to understand or *byn* and the same with see or *ra’ah* with respect to perceive or *yadah*. Both instances serve to show an innate resistance to what God has to say.

Even though Isaiah demonstrated a readiness to obey, when he heard these words he must have been dismayed. Already the people had become dull and insensitive to things divine, so how bad could it get? No small wonder that in the next verse he asks, “How long?” The Lord has in mind the following which Isaiah must carry out:

First, note the singular heart or *lev* belonging to the plural people which reveals their collective nature whether it concerns good or evil. Isaiah has to do something which goes against his grain as a prophet. He has to make this singular heart fat or *shaman*.

Second, he has to make heavy or *kaved* the collective ears of the people almost as though filling them with ear wax.

Thirdly he has to shut their eyes or *shahah* which means to look around as well as to be smeared over. Isaiah does this reluctantly but obediently in preparation for rendering the warnings of judgment to be sure. With regard to this difficult command, the Lord adds “turn and be healed” or *shuv* and *rapha’*, the latter fundamentally meaning to sew together or to mend. Then again, by divine intervention this did not happen.

In vs. 13 (*kai* #91-11) Jesus poses two rhetorical questions to the twelve and others with him. The two verbs are *oida* + and *ginosko* or to know and to understand, the first with respect to the parable of the sower and the second with respect to all the parables Jesus had put forth to the people (cf. vs. 2). These questions aren’t meant to have a response, just to get attention, for in vs. 14 Jesus states that the job of the sower is to sow the word, *speiro* and *logos* (both +). In other words, the sower contains a singular *logos* which has various effects once it as seed is let go. According to the parable, four out of five miss the mark, if you will, with only one taking root and producing grain. Note that grain as used for bread is part of the imagery, not fruit.

In vs. 15 (*kai* #92-12) Jesus starts off with the first example in the parable, namely, the seed which represent the *logos* + are sown by the path or *hodos* +. Note the verb *speiro* + which implies a deliberate action compared with the more casual *pipto* or to fall as in vs.

4. From this position *para* the road—close enough to it yet not on it—the seed hear or *akouo*. At this moment Satan comes along at once (*euthus*). In other words, he has been close by all along watching and waiting. Just as immediately he comes and takes away the *logos* + which had been sown literally into (*eis*) them, the seed/persons *para* the road. Indeed, Satan paid close attention to the sower. As soon as the sower went out, he followed him to prevent any growth. As for the sower, nothing is said of him. He just kept on moving and scattering seed.

Vs. 16 (*kai* #93-13) has seed which had been sown in rocky ground, *speiro* +. Upon hearing the word (*akouo* and *logos*, both +), those located there receive it immediately (*euthus*) just like the ones beside the road and do so joyfully, *lambano* and *chara*, the latter also as gladness. The significance of *euthus* suggests a desire to escape the harsh environment where they found themselves. While the people there were very much open to the *logos*, by reason of their location on the rocks they were unable to incorporate it. In other words, their spiritual constitution was too withered to take it in. Note the direct correspondence as follows: *akouo*->*euthus*->*lambano* or hear->immediately->receive with *euthus*/immediately in between the two, as it were.

Vs. 17 continues as part of the previous verse joined by *kai* (#94-14). The seed representing those on rocky ground prevented them from taking root, the words “in themselves” (*en heautois*) suggesting the hardened outer skin from the sun beating down upon these people. Still, they have sufficient energy to endure for a short time, *proskairos* or the root *kairos* or special time prefaced with the preposition *pros*- suggestive of direction towards-which. However, the word *eita* or “then” signifies a shift in time or the coming of tribulation or persecution (*thlipsis* and *diogmos*) with regard to the word or *logos*. At once (*euthus*) this causes them to stumble or *skandalizo* which also means to take offense.

Vs. 18 (*kai* #95-15) speaks of “others” or seeds which have been sown...*speiro* +, not *pipto* or to have fallen...among (*eis*, into) thorns. As with the ones along the path and rocky ground, they hear the word, *akouo* and *logos*. Throughout this parable Jesus doesn't elaborate upon *logos* as belonging to God. It seems he presumes the twelve and others with them have an idea of what it means. Vs 19 (*kai* #96-16 as 'but') which continues as part of the previous verse says that worldly cares, delight in riches and care for other things: *merimna*, *apate* and *epithumia* or anxious thought, fraud or deceit and desire or *thumos* as all one's heart and minds upon or *epi*-). First they enter and then choke the *logos* + thereby making it unfruitful. *Sumpnigo* is the verb also as to throttle, *sum*- as with making it all the more forceful.

Jesus concludes his exposition on the parable of the sower in vs. 20 which begins with *kai* (#97-17) rendered as “but.” Again, seed is sown or deliberately placed in good (*kalos* +) soil. This time their hearing or *akouo* + leads to accepting the word, *paradechomai* or to receive beside (*para*-) and *logos* +. Not only do they bear fruit (*karpophoreo*)...*karpous* in the general sense usually applied to fruit, not grain...but do so up to a hundredfold.

Though he doesn't say it, Jesus hopes those listening to him produce this amount, *hodos* + or path noted in vs. 4 foreshadowing the way they will soon tread in their missionary endeavors.

In vs. 21 (*kai* #98-18) makes a shift to the example of a lamp after Jesus had spent a considerable time with the parable of the five type of seeds. Presumably he was still on the boat as noted at the beginning of this chapter. Jesus begins with a rhetorical question, the answer to which is obvious. *Meti* (neuter of *metis*) can be rendered as something like "lest anything" and is used with a question expecting a strong negative answer, the context being obvious. The lamp or *luchnos* at hand is something relatively small, not bright, with a number of them being required to cast sufficient light in a darkened room. It isn't intended to be hidden away under such highly combustible objects as a bushel or a bed. Rather, a *luchnos* is to be placed on a stand or *luchnia*, the two words being similar. Everyone knows such an obvious fact. However, Jesus speaks as such as he fleshes out the example at hand.

Jesus and those with him could tell right away where he was going with this example of a common oil lamp. Whatever is hidden is to be disclosed and whatever is concealed is meant to be brought out into the open. Jesus puts his own twist on this contrast between what's hidden and what's not, dividing it into two parts. The first part consists of *kruptos* vs. *phaneroo* or that which is already hidden and intended to remain that way yet at sometime is destined to become manifest. The second part is similar. Jesus speaks of what is hidden, *apokruptos* in the sense of being intentionally put away yet similarly is destined to be made manifest or *phaneros* or more accurately, "into what is manifest."

Jesus concludes this example with a stern admonition, namely, anyone with ears is to hear or anyone with the faculty of hearing needs to tune into what this contrast between being hidden and being manifest is all about. It has the advantage of getting directly to what lays hidden within a person. The quicker what's there is revealed, the better off that person will be even if the experience is painful.

Vs. 24 (*kai* #99-19) begins with Jesus speaking to "them," presumably the same audience that had gathered at the shore of Lake Galilee, the disciples included. This interjection can be taken as a way of sustaining their attention after which he bids everyone to take heed to what they hear, that is, *blepo* followed by *akouo* (both +) or seeing followed by hearing. Actually both faculties are to be aligned and treated as one as well as being interchanged. This is born out by Jesus referring to the measure or *metros* a person gives out. After all a measure is something limited no matter how large it may be. The same *metros* will be returned whether it's generous or stingy. However, the plus side is that more will be given in return for this *metros*. Jesus concludes by saying that the person who has (nothing is specified) will be given more and *visa versa*. The message seems to be that if a person doesn't respond to what little truth he or she may know, no profit will come from that. You get according to your efforts.

In vs. 26 (*kai* #100-20) Jesus continues speaking from offshore, returning to a parable about seeds. The reason is obvious. Most of his audience consists of peasant farmers making a hard-scrabble existence. One gets the impression that those engaged in fishing belonged to a wealthier, more exclusive group which could be why Jesus doesn't speak of them even though he chose two sets of brothers to be among his apostles. He switches to talking about the kingdom of God last mentioned in vs. 11 as having been given to the twelve. So when he brings it up again, naturally the twelve are somewhat concerned, even threatened. Is this kingdom of God going to be made available to other persons, and we no longer will be in charge nor have a special place?

This time the parable consists of a man scattering seed pretty much willy-nilly upon the ground which is not unlike the earlier one where Jesus goes to some length fleshing it out. In this instance the seed grows over time without him having the slightest idea of the mysterious process involved. All this man knows is that once the grain has appeared, it's time to go out and reap the harvest. As for vs. 27 which is a continuation of the previous verse, it begins with *kai* (#101-21). It seems that Jesus wishes his listeners to focus upon not so much the growth period but the harvest. Will it come to fruition as expected? This depends both upon the weather as well as the sower caring for the land.

After having spoken of this parable in just a few sentences, in vs. 30 (*kai* #102-22) Jesus uses the first person plural when posing a question as to what the kingdom of God may be compared, *homoioo* or to liken. The same applies to finding a suitable parable. Perhaps this manner of speaking is a way Jesus is putting at ease those listening to him so they aren't unduly worried about failing to understand his words about the harvest. Right away *kai* (#103-23) serves to connect vs. 32 with the one before it where Jesus speaks of the mustard seed growing from its tiny beginning to becoming the greatest of all shrubs, *lachanon* generally as an edible garden herb or vegetable. Not only that, its large branches provide shade and places for birds to make their nests. Thus what is smallest turns out to become the largest. We can assume that the sower of vs. 26 is the one responsible for this.

Vs. 33 begins with *kai* (#104-24) which goes untranslated and brings Jesus' teaching through parables to a conclusion. It suggests that he finally was able to leave the boat and come on shore. Beforehand, however, vs. 33 says that Jesus had used many such parables favoring the scattering of seed and what happens next. The same verse puts an important qualification on his words: "as they were able to hear it," that is, as they were able to hear the word or the *logos* + contained within the numerous parables which unified them all.

It's clear that Jesus never spoke above the heads of his listeners. Even better, never did speak like the scribes or Pharisees who taught from a position of authority far removed from daily life. On the other hand, Jesus spoke privately to not just to his disciples but as vs. 34 puts it, to "his own" disciples meaning those closest to him, presumably others associated with the twelve, these most likely including numerous women who tagged along

ministering to him and the others. The phrase *kat' idian* or literally “according to own” is rendered as “privately,” and the same word (*idios*, own) refers to the disciples at hand. To them Jesus explained everything which is put vividly by the verb *epiluo*, to loosen upon.

Vs. 35 begins with the conjunctive *kai* (#105-25) which goes untranslated. As noted above, Jesus seems to have lingered a while in the vicinity of the Sea of Galilee by reason of the words which read literally as “in that day,” the day when he had given those parable from the boat. The time now is evening when without any explanation he asked to go to the other side of the sea. Presumably he’s making this request to the twelve and other close disciples. All readily concurred thinking that Jesus wanted to escape the crowds. Surely he didn’t mean the country of the Gerasenes, a place to be avoided. At the same time “other boats” followed. However, those among his disciples familiar with the Sea of Galilee were quite reluctant with the onset of night when conditions on the water could change suddenly.

And so off went Jesus and his disciples (cf. vs. 36 with *kai* #106-26). It seems shortly after they set sail—again, keeping in mind they left during the evening so by now it must be completely night—a great storm arose, *lailaps*. This is mentioned in vs. 37 (*kai* #107-27), more as a whirlwind or even a hurricane which quickly fills the boat with water. At this point we can hear some of the disciples muttering among themselves but not speaking with Jesus, “We told you so!” what really galled them was that in vs. 38 (*kai* #108-28 as ‘but’) Jesus was sound asleep in the stern. Surely they thought he must have been pretending and thereby testing his disciples. How could anyone doze off under such conditions? Anyway, it didn’t do a thing to assuage their anxiety. It had just the opposite effect.

After waking Jesus up or better, trying to determine whether he was faking it or not, those in the boat exclaimed that he oblivious to the fact that they are perishing, *apollumi* +. In vs. 39 (*kai* #109-29) Jesus gets up and at once rebukes the wind, *epitmao* +. You get a sense that he did this not because everyone onboard was in immediate danger but simply to quiet their anxiety. Thus Jesus does a double *epitmao*. He says to the wind “peace” or *siapao*, this verb again applicable to his shipmates. There followed at once a great calm or *galene*, a state of being unruffled.

In vs. 40 (*kai* #110-30) Jesus comes off with two rhetorical sentences meant to be taken as one. His disciples knew what was coming just by the look on his face, he asking why they were afraid, *deilos* which is more along the lines of being cowardly or timid. The second question was more to the point, that they lacked faith or *pistis*. Vs. 41 (*kai* #111-31) concludes this chapter abruptly with no response from those on board (How could they?) except by saying that everyone was filled with awe. This is expressed literally with “they feared a great fear,” *phobeomai* and *phobis* both of which connote a certain terror. As for rhetorical questions, the one concluding Chapter Four naturally arose from those present, that is, they asked about the identity of Jesus as someone who had power over such a

terrible storm.

Chapter Four has a total of thirty-one verses beginning with the conjunctive *kai*.

Chapter Five

The *kai* (#112-1) which opens this new chapter signals both relief and new danger. Those in the boat with Jesus were relieved to have survived that harrowing experience of a storm as well as having been put to shame by Jesus having calmed its violence. So here they were, seasoned fishermen familiar with conditions on the Sea of Galilee reduced to almost servile fear as well as having been shamed by someone who hadn't a clue as to weather conditions they had grown up with. As for the great calm of 4.39, the same applied in the boat after the storm until the boat arrived to the other side.

Now part two, if you will, of the *kai* noted just above. Most in the boat were very familiar with what lay on "the other side of the sea" as vs. 1 has it, the country of the Gerasenes. This was an area pretty much off limits, chiefly inhabited by pagans and already infamous by reason of the man possessed with an unclean spirit whose reputation had spread far and wide. A bit later he's described in vivid, terrifying terms which suggests that many a fisherman heard his howls echoing across the water, a clear sign to keep away. Even looking at the steep hills was scary enough. When Jesus asked to go to the other side in 4.35 those with him hoped he meant somewhere other than this place, perhaps further down south.

Although we don't hear any objections from Jesus' companions as to landing in the country of the Gerasenes, certainly we can feel their fear and hesitation. Even the words "country of the Gerasenes" has a somewhat ominous air about it, a place to be avoided at all costs. Note that vs. 2 begins with a *kai* (#113-2) indicating that as soon as they landed and Jesus had come out of the boat, the man who had terrified everyone came right up to him. Indeed, we get the impression that everyone else remained in the boat ready to shove off at a moment's notice, even leaving Jesus behind if necessary. They figured if he could calm the storm, easily he could handle this maniac. Describing him as having an unclean spirit or a *pneuma* which is *akathartos* (both +) indeed is close to an understatement.

Vs. 2 describes the man who met Jesus as having come out of the tombs, the place to which he had been expelled to live out his days. He was so fierce and strong that no one was able to constrain him, even with a chain and shackles. In fact, vs. 4 says that nobody was strong enough to subdue him, *damazo* also as to tame. What made things almost unbearable was that as vs. 5 says beginning with *kai* #114-3 this man cried out night and day from both among the tombs and upon the hilltops, *krazo* also to scream as well as to shriek while cutting himself with stones.

Despite this picture straight from a horror movie, vs. 6 which begins with the conjunctive *kai* (#115-4) has this man having seen Jesus from afar, *apo makrothen* possibly even from some distance out on the lake. Thus he ran right up to him and worshiped him, *proskuneo* suggesting an attitude of submission. In the case at hand, the preposition *pros-* as direction towards-which mirrors his intense desire to meet Jesus and be freed from his terrible affliction. It'd come as no surprise that some locals were in the area and watched from a safe distance, not daring to draw near. At first they thought the man would first slay Jesus then those in the boat. But when they saw something so remarkable as this *proskuneo*, they were taken aback completely.

Although we have the *pros-* of *proskuneo* in vs. 6, at the same time in vs. 7 (*kai* #116-5) we have words which show that this man is keeping a certain distance from Jesus. He says (*lego* compared with *krazo* of vs. 5) in a loud voice with both a taunt and challenge in his voice words which read literally "what to me and to you?" There's a genuine recognition of Jesus as someone special which had the advantage of putting those in the boat somewhat at ease. He calls Jesus Son of the Most High God, something only a person moved by the Holy Spirit or an unclean spirit can recognize. The man implores Jesus by God not to torment him, *horkizo* also as to swear with regard to *basanizo* also as to disturb. In other words, he saw Jesus as both intruding on his own turf while at the same hoping Jesus would relieve him of his torment. No question that Jesus could see right through this man's longing to be healed.

Before ridding the man of the unclean spirit in vs. 8 Jesus addresses it directly telling it to come out. This spirit presented obeyed at once and left as singular *pneuma*. Once this happened, Jesus (*kai* #117-6 beginning vs. 9) asked its name and got the response *Legion* by reason of being many. As for this word, it applies to a unit in the Roman army comprising some six thousand men or better, those who are heavily armed and ready for battle. No wonder the man who had them was so afflicted. Compare him as one individual outside the man with *Legion* still in him as vs. infers 13.

In vs. 10 which begins with *kai* (#118-7) the unclean spirit addresses Jesus as one individual, as though he were the commander of the legion at hand. Actually he begged Jesus (*parakaleo* + or to summon beside, *para-*) literally "much," the plural of *polus* which reflects the large number of those under him. They don't wish to be sent from the country in which they are in, that is, the "country of the Gerasenes" noted in vs. 1. They felt secure on the other side of the Sea of Galilee, pretty much isolated and able to do what they wished even if it meant terrorizing the local inhabitants.

For a moment Jesus thought this tense encounter was over, for the unclean spirit sounded fairly agreeable but not quite. Then he and this spirit caught sight of a large herd of swine feeding nearby. It quickly thought entering this herd would be a compromise to which Jesus concurred (vs. 12, *kai* #119-8). As the first sentence of vs. 13 which begins with *kai* (#120-9) and translates as "so" puts it, "He gave them leave," *epitrepo* literally as to turn upon. At once the unclean spirits "came out" or *exerchomai* +. Thus *Legion* which

must have been unclean spirits as their leader rushed into the swine which numbered around two thousand. That means each swine contained three unclean spirits. Now the herd wasted no time rushing headlong down the steep bank into the sea causing yet another commotion. The text says that the unclean spirit and *Legion* did not perish. As requested, they remained in the land or territory but were forced to live under water.

Vs. 14 begins with *kai* (#121-10) which goes untranslated saying that the herdsmen in charge of the swine fled pretty much in the opposite direction and at once informed everyone as to what had just happened. Naturally people came from all over to see for themselves, many with hesitation due to the reputation about the man who had been possessed. They saw both Jesus and the man described as a demoniac (vs. 15, *kai* #122-11), *daimonizomai* or one who had been possessed. He was simply sitting there with Jesus, the two most likely having a conversation. It was a quite a sight compared to what everyone had grown accustomed to. Here was someone who for a long time had terrorized everyone fully clothed and in his right mind, *sophroneo* meaning to be prudent and able to think in a sound manner. Still, everyone was afraid which is how vs. 15 concludes, *phobeo* +.

In vs. 16 (*kai* #123-12) those persons who had seen what happened—from a distance, of course—spread word like fire and rightly so. Despite the good news at such a terrorizing threat now controlled seemed too good to be true. Naturally people were fearful of Jesus and instead of welcoming him, they begged him to depart, *parakaleo* + in vs. 17, *kai* #124-13. He complied and got into the boat (vs. 18, *kai* #125-14). The text presents this as if he had come alone. No mention is made of his disciples who although they had only reports about the demoniac until now were just as afraid as the local inhabitants. All they could do was stand in awe, wondering among themselves what they had gotten into. Keep in mind too that they had just made a perilous voyage across the Sea of Galilee and experienced Jesus having calmed a violent storm.

While on the verge of departing, in vs. 18 the man who had been cured implored (*parakaleo* +) Jesus to go with him. On the surface it seemed plausible, but Jesus forbade him (vs. 19, *kai* #126-15), bidding him to return home and tell everyone how much the Lord had done for him, the verb being *apaggello*. In other words, he was to be a kind of apostle...one sent...among those whom he had terrorized so long albeit unwittingly. The man did this at once (cf. vs. 20, *kai* #127-16) and engaged in spreading word what Jesus had done for him, *kerusso* +. Indeed he must have had a powerful effect though like so many such people who had interacted with Jesus, passed off the scene making us wonder what had happened to him as well as those with whom they came in contact. In the case at hand, did this man eventually found a church? At least we can say for certain that both sides of the Sea of Galilee had received first hand witness as to Jesus Christ.

Vs. 21 (*kai* #128-17) contains two overlapping incidents which are the longest in Mark's Gospel apart from his account of Jesus' passion and death. It begins in a matter-of-fact way where Jesus got into the boat and crossed "to the other side." On the surface it was

an uneventful trip, but for the apostles they were fearful of another storm but more so from the unclean spirit and *Legion* lurking beneath the water. To be sure, it was the quickest transit the apostles ever made. Even before disembarking a great crowd or *ochlos* + had gathered anxious to find out whether Jesus and his companions had made it through the recent violent storm. At the moment they had no idea that they had traveled to the other side. Obviously they were relieved except perhaps some scribes or Pharisees who decided to join the gathering, hoping the storm had disposed of him quietly and conveniently. Vs. 21 concludes with Jesus “beside the sea” perhaps teaching as well as healing.

The commotion from the crowd reached Jairus, a ruler of the local synagogue (vs. 22, *kai* #129-18) who upon seeing Jesus fell at his feet, *pros* suggesting directly in front and immediacy of action. Vs. 23 begins with *kai* (#130-19) thereby making it and the previous verse one continuous sentence where Jairus begs Jesus (*parakaleo* +). His daughter was not quite dead but close to it and asked Jesus to lay hands on her to become well, *sozo* fundamentally as to save or to rescue. Without further ado, Jesus accompanied Jairus, the two of them rushing off (cf. vs. 24, *kai* #131-20) followed, of course, with that great crowd or *ochlos* +. Not only did they follow Jesus and Jairus but thronged about him where the preposition *sun-* (with) of *sunthlibo* intensifies this pressing in upon. Jesus was pretty much used to this though it must have frightened Jairus. Everyone knew where Jairus lived, so despite this *sunthlibo*, they allowed the two men some room to maneuver because they eager to see if Jesus would heal the little girl. Some must have rushed ahead in anticipation and to get a better view.

Vs. 25 begins with *kai* (#132-21), interjecting a woman among the throng who had been afflicted with a flow of blood for twelve years. In addition to this physical ailment, she must have suffered a certain isolation and even alienation by way of religious reasons, that she was inherently defiled and perhaps even possessed. Vs. 26 (*kai* #133-22) really brings it home by saying she had spent a small fortune seeing a whole slew of physicians with no result. Instead, her situation deteriorated. Again, this is so-called “proof” that she was impure and to be avoided at all costs. As for her presence in the crowd, everyone was so taken up with seeing Jesus that she was unnoticed.

This woman had heard reports about Jesus, literally “around Jesus” which infers she was too ill to go down to the seashore as part of the large crowd which most likely swelled when Jairus got involved. Then she figured why not? There’s nothing to lose. She had such great faith—perhaps desperation was more like it—that she thought to herself just touching Jesus’ garment would effect a cure. In other words, this was the last throw of the dice. So the women went ahead and did what she had resolved, vs. 29 beginning with the conjunctive *kai* (#134-23). At once (*euthus*) the hemorrhage ceased which means she had been plagued with a flow of blood that posed a constant problem. The advantage of the current situation was because so many people were present that this flow went unnoticed. Otherwise, they would have been revolted and cast her off.

Vs. 30 begins with *kai* and *euthus* (#135-24), the latter happening simultaneously with the *euthus* of the previous verse when the woman's hemorrhaging of blood ceased. *Epiginosko* or literally to know upon (*epi-*) is the verb with regard to Jesus realizing that *dunamis* or power in him went out for him. In other words, we have first *en* or in followed by *ex* or out. *Epiginosko* is difficult to define adequately inferring some inbuilt or native capacity to bring about an effect. Chances are there may have been other people with various afflictions pressing in upon Jesus but only in this instance a contact was made. This verse is intriguing since it makes us wonder what an exit of healing power must have felt like.

The emission (for lack of a better word) of such *dunamis* caught Jesus by surprise. It seemed to have happened automatically, catching him unawares. That's why he asked who had touched his garments, the response from his disciples being a natural one in vs. 31 (*kai* #136-25) as to why he asked this given the throng about him. Actually the way they asked him was a bit on the rough side which is understandable given the fact that the disciples and Jesus could barely hear each other being jumbled this way and that. Nevertheless Jesus persisted in trying to discover who had just touched him and caused his *dunamis* to come forth (cf. vs. 32, *kai* #137-26).

So while Jesus was glancing this way or that—interestingly he knew *dunamis* left him but didn't know where it went—the woman came forth all on her own. Such was the effect. She came forth quite easily, if you will, because by now the crowd realized something had happened, having too felt the effect of Jesus' *dunamis*. Thus the woman had an open path with people to her left and to her right opening up. Obviously she was shaken as well as cured, at this time wondering if it had been worth her effort to touch Jesus. As vs. 33 puts it, she fell down before Jesus and told him the “whole truth” or *aletheia*. The crowd fell so quiet that not a sound could be heard. Everyone nearby of course was listening in to see what would happen next.

And so in vs. 34 Jesus addresses the woman in three parts, if you will:

- First he uses the comforting familiar term *thugater* or daughter.
- Secondly Jesus recognized her faith which made her whole; i.e., *pistis* -> *sozo* (both +).
- Thirdly he bade her to go literally “into peace” or *eirene*.
- Finally Jesus tells the woman to be healed (the adjective *hugies*) of her disease, *mastix* also as a whip for driving horses.

So while the woman was healed upon having touched Jesus' garment, it was her faith that was the real agent of making her well, *sozo* having a more inclusive sense of saving, of rescuing.

Vs. 35 shifts back to before this incident of the woman with the hemorrhaging of blood, that is, Jesus making his way to the house of Jairus. After all, this leader of the local syna-

gogue had been with Jesus when the woman was cured. Surely, he thought, if this could happen almost at random, Jesus would cure my daughter. However at this juncture someone came and told Jairus that his daughter had died. Jairus' hopes then must have crashed, especially the rather harsh even insulting words that he heard others observe, "Why trouble the Teacher any further?" Even the verb comes across as harsh, *skullo* also as to annoy almost to the point of molesting. However, Jesus overheard or *parakouo*...heard beside...the *logos* + being spoken as the text runs literally and brushed it off. He simply turned to the ruler and told him to believe, not to fear, *pisteuo* and *phobeo* (both +). Welcomed words indeed given the sudden and rude manner of informing Jairus.

After this meeting, in vs. 37 which begins with *kai* (#138-27) Jesus makes it clear to everyone that he wants only Jairus, Peter, James and John to follow him, the verb being *sunakoloutheo*, the preposition *sun-* as with. Apparently the throng that had accompanied him obeyed out of respect for the news about the girl reported as dead. Upon coming to Jairus' home Jesus beheld quite a scene described in vs. 38 (*kai* #139-28). People were weeping and wailing loudly, *klaio* and the more vivid *alalazo*, to put on a show when it comes to showing grief. Actually he heard this from some distance away which made him walk more quickly in order to put a stop to it. Such a display, however, says a lot about how highly regarded people held Jairus as a prominent figure in the synagogue. In vs. 39 (*kai* #140-29) he sees even more people putting on quite a scene and rebukes them saying that the child is simply asleep. To this the only response was mockery in vs. 40 (*kai* #141-30), the preposition *kata-* prefaced to the root *gelao* or to laugh...to laugh down...making it all the more abusive.

Having dismissed everyone except the parents "and those with him" (presumably Peter, James and John), in vs. 41 (*kai* #142-31) Jesus approaches the child, takes her hand and utters *talitha cumi* rendered as "Little girl, arise." One source says that perhaps Mark included the literal Aramaic to prove that Jesus uses mere words, not a magical spell. Right away (vs. 42 *kai* #143-32) the girl got up and walked. That was it. Chances are she rushed into the arms of her parents who then introduced her to Jesus. No small one everyone was amazed, the verb *existemi* and the noun derived from it, *exstasis* both implying to stand out (*ex-*).

Then in vs. 43 (*kai* #144-33) Jesus gets very serious and strictly charges that no one outside those in the room is to know about what had happened, *diastello* or the verbal root *stello* as to set in order prefaced with the preposition *dia-* to suggest thoroughness. Obviously everyone in the area knew about the child having become ill and then supposedly had died. No question, word got out at once. Perhaps Jesus wanted to tamp down any news about himself as a healer reaching the ears of the religious establishment. Obviously this was mission impossible following the cure of the woman with the hemorrhaging of blood. Thus Jesus was caught in a predicament that he knew he could never escape. It was simply a matter of time before he'd be arrested and most likely put to death.

Chapter Five has a total of thirty-three verses beginning with the conjunctive *kai*.

Chapter Six

This new chapter begins with *kai* (#145-1) which isn't translated in the RSV. Jesus left Jairus' house after having cured his daughter with a swiftness we've grown accustomed to in Mark's account. However, the case at hand. *Ekeithen* or "from that place" with mention of his disciples stands in contrast to "his own country." The impression is that Jesus left in such a hurry his disciples had a hard time keeping up with him. He wished to find security, albeit temporary, in his own country after having strictly charged those of Jairus' household not to broadcast the miracle. *Patris* or homeland indicates this desire for safety or security. In other words, Jesus realized that his countrymen might want him to lead some kind of protest or even rebellion and eventually shake off the Roman yoke. Indeed, he was caught between the proverbial rock and a hard place.

Vs. 2 (*kai* #146-2) has Jesus teaching (*didasko* +) on the Sabbath, this time in his home synagogue, the same one where he had cured the man with the withered hand and where he was rebuked by the Pharisees (cf. 3.1+) though there is no reference to him teaching. Many who had heard Jesus were astonished, the verbal root *plesso* or to strike, to smite reinforced by the preposition *ek-* or from prefaced to it, *ekplesso* +. Was the man with the withered hand among them? Everyone present asked among themselves where Jesus got such teaching and wisdom, *sophia*. As is the case with much of Jesus' teaching we hear reports of how it was received but precious little details as to the content. We can assume with some assurance that Jesus did not speak down to those listening to him as often was the case with religious authorities. Furthermore, people were struck by the mighty works he had done, *dunamis* + fundamentally as power or might.

Vs. 3 continues with the people speaking about Jesus, their tone having shifted from wonderment to a less than welcoming tone. They recognized Jesus as being one of their own, a carpenter, and were familiar with his relatives and mother. In other words, such familiarity led to them take offense, *skandalizo* + or to stumble with regard to recognition of Jesus' humble beginnings. Note the way the people put it with regard to his relatives: "and are not his sisters here with us?"

In vs. 4 (*kai* #147-3) Jesus responds with full realization that this was one of the most difficult situations confronting him as to his identity. When speaking of a prophet being without honor in his own country, kin and house, he's addressing people he knew when younger and who were acquainted with his parents. And so Jesus must have felt extremely awkward, wishing to leave so as not to cause family members and friends any shame by reason of being associated with him. At the same time this experience proved to be valuable. From now on Jesus would have to walk a delicate line between people of his own village and religious authorities who wished to trip him up. No doubt both groups must have collaborated somewhere along the line. As vs. 5 puts it (*kai* #148-4), such is the chief reason why Jesus was unable to accomplish mighty works (*dunamis* +).

We can feel the unease Mark had as he recorded this incident, having added the fact that Jesus cured a few sick people. No doubt in vs. 6 (*kai* #149-5) he marveled (*thaumazo* also to be amazed) because of the unbelief the people had demonstrated. There's something strong and direct which hits home about *apistia*, that is, the noun faith prefaced with the alpha privative. However this didn't prevent Jesus from teaching (*didasko* +) in the surrounding villages. We have no word as to their response, but we can assume it was far more receptive.

Jesus felt it was time for the twelve to get their feet wet and to do some missionary work on their own, if you will. They've been in his company a while now, learning chiefly by observation. Although the text doesn't mention it, Jesus must have set a time and place for their return so all twelve could share their experiences with him and with each other. What was particularly instructive was a recent incident as the one just recounted, of how Jesus' own people pretty much turned on him. Then, of course, are the religious authorities starting to hound every step he takes. To be sure, the twelve will be exposed to some if not all this. And so in vs. 7 (*kai* #150-6) first Jesus summons them and then sends them out two by two, giving them authority over unclean spirits. The text simply recounts this and gives no details as to how Jesus transmitted this *exousia* +. Most likely some kind of physical gesture was involved such as laying on of hands. As for the unclean spirits (*pneuma* +), certainly the twelve had exposure to that by their recent experience with the Gerasene demoniac. At least memory of having been in the land of the Gerasenes served to prepare them for what they may encounter.

In addition to giving authority over unclean spirits—*kai* (#151-7) in vs. 8 which goes untranslated—Jesus charged the twelve, the verbal root *aggello*, to pass along a message which is enhanced by the preposition *para-* as a preface, implying someone at your side. They were to take the bare minimum for their journey. Jesus doesn't tell them where to go, that being left to their discretion. Since they were to set out in pairs, that means six destinations. Since they were familiar with the territory, some may have gone to places Jesus had not yet visited whereas others played it safe and revisited places that were close by. All their reliance was upon faith in the *exousia* or authority Jesus had given them. Certainly they had considerable fear of what might be in store for them, again, memory of the Gerasene demoniac having been possessed by Legion which had consisted of six hundred unclean spirits.

Vs. 10 (*kai* #152-8) continues with Jesus' instruction as where to live. It boils down to how receptive the local inhabitants were to having these men. However, he's quite harsh to anyone who doesn't accept these newly minted missionaries. More specifically, his words apply to those who fail to receive them which amounts to not hearing what they have to say (vs. 11, *kai* #153-9). The six pairs are to shake the dust off their feet as a testimony against any refusal to listen, *marturion* + with the preposition *eis*, into. As the Gospel has noted on several occasions, people from far and wide heard of Jesus. The same would apply to many who had encountered these missionaries. It's important to keep in mind that

the reason Jesus had dispatched the six pairs of apostles. They are to have authority over unclean spirits. If that's true, then those who reject the apostles run the risk of being governed by such spirits.

At the same time the twelve had to do some preaching or *kerusso* + which was associated with expelling unclean spirits (cf vs. 12, *kai* #154-10). If anyone is receptive to hearing what they said, repentance will follow, *metanoeo* +. Apparently the missionary experiment was a resounding success. Vs. 13 (*kai* #155-11) says that the apostle cast out many demons, anointed a good number of people with oil and healed them. Though the text speaks of Jesus imparting this *exousia* or authority in vs. 7, how it actually played out among the twelve and their response to having it remains unsaid. In other words, the twelve didn't go out as robots, do what was required of them and file a report with Jesus. Some may have wondered if this *exousia* would depart once their mission was over. Considerable discussion must have taken place among the pairs out in the field as well as when all twelve reconvened. Surely there was some competition involved which Jesus frowned upon: who cast out more spirits and healed the largest number of people.

While the previous section and the one not long before it (the Gerasene demoniac) deal with unclean spirits, vs. 14 (*kai* #156-12 but not translated) shifts to King Herod who might be described as worse than any of these spirits. The verse says simply that Herod "heard of it" which seems to refer to the mission of twelve apostles. The same verse adds that Jesus' name had become known, *phaneros* implying that which is evident¹¹. Apparently a whole slew of rumors were rampant, one of which was that John the baptizer was alive. This is the first time he's mentioned in Mark's Gospel as having been put to death. Among the people John could be in the form of Elisha or any of the prophets. If that were true, the same confusion easily could have been applied to Jesus himself.

Vs. 15 speaks of Jesus being Elijah which is based on the concluding book of Malachi (3.24 in the Hebrew text): "See, I will send you the prophet Elijah before that great and dreadful day of the Lord comes. He will turn the hearts of the fathers to their children and the hearts of the children to their fathers; or else I will come and strike the land with a curse." The Lord promises to send the prophet Elijah before the day of the Lord described as being great and awesome (*gadal* and *yare'* the latter suggestive of fearful in the sense of showing respect. When this day arrives, the Lord will turn the singular heart (*lev*) of the fathers to their children and the heart of theirs to their fathers. And so this book concludes with a rather sudden ending. That is to say, if such a turning back to the Lord doesn't happen, he will strike the land with a curse. Also note that this verse is cited in Lk 1.17 with regard to the birth of John the Baptist: "and he will go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah."

Despite this, Herod maintained that he had beheaded John but now has risen from the dead. There then follow a considerable number of verses as to the background of John's

¹¹ The Greek of vs. 14 has "his name," not "Jesus' name."

death. Vs. 29 ends with words similar to vs. 14, that is, King Herod and John's disciples: "heard of it." In other words, anonymous secondary sources are swirling around and play a large part with regard to events that follow. Because the account presented here lays out the details of what happened in a straight forward manner, notations on them are omitted. As for the *kai* references, they run as follows: vs. 21 (*kai* #157-13), vs. 22 (*kai* #158-14), vs. 23 (*kai* #159-15), vs. 24 (*kai* #160-16), vs. 25 (*kai* #161-17), vs. 26 (*kai* #162-18), vs. 27 (*kai* #163-19), vs. 28 (*kai* #164-20), vs. 29 (*kai* #165-21).

After an interlude of some sixteen verses, vs. 30—it begins with *kai* (#166-22) which goes untranslated—the text gets back to the six pairs of apostles dispatched by Jesus on their first solo missionary endeavor. We can just hear them vying with each other as to which pair was the most successful as well as attempting to win Jesus' favor. He had remained indifferent to all this as well as saying nothing which must have unnerved the apostles. The only words we get are in vs. 31 (*kai* #167-23) when Jesus invites them to come with him to a lonely place in order to rest. This place isn't identified except as being *eremos* + or deserted, uninhabited. *Anapauo* or to rest can apply to the still excited, overworked minds of the apostles relishing their recent success in healing as well as preaching.

It'd come as no surprise that while initially successful, in the long run the apostles' endeavors were somewhat tainted. They tended to attribute too much credit to their own efforts instead of referring their actions and words to Jesus. An incident like this shows the huge difference the Holy Spirit's intervention would make later on at Pentecost. So in the grander scheme of things, such was the lesson the twelve had learned and what Jesus was telling them in this deserted place far admiring eyes.

Vs. 30 continues describing the current situation. Quite a few people were coming and going which meant that Jesus and the twelve had no private space nor time. One explanation for this is that without intending to do so the twelve had brought back from their missionary endeavors a considerable amount of people wanting to meet Jesus. It was both a consolation for the twelve as to their success yet a reminder that these people didn't come to see them. It was Jesus whom they sought.

Vs. 32 (*kai* #168-24) has Jesus and those with him get into a boat, this time with some visible hesitation from the apostles due to the recent experience of having been caught in a storm. Also they made it clear that they do not want to return to the country of the Gerasenes. Jesus took this into consideration and asked to head for a favorite spot of his. Not only did his apostles know about this place, most likely having been there before, but it seemed just about everyone else knew. That's why a whole mass of people rushed to that place on foot meaning it couldn't have been on the other side of the Sea of Galilee but somewhere relatively close by. Vs. 33 which begins with *kai* (#169-25) translated as "now" speaks of a kind of race. The crowd was so excited to see Jesus that they hastened to the place before he got there. When the apostles saw the crowd surge forward, they encouraged him cross over he other side, but he overruled them.

Jesus saw what was going on and knew he couldn't escape the crowds. The same applied to the apostles though we can assume they were less compassionate despite having been partly responsible for so many people by reason of their successful missionary venture. Upon disembarking Jesus saw that so many people had gotten to this so-called deserted place well before him. The throng resembled more as a herd of sheep without a shepherd which caused Jesus to have compassion on them, (vs. 34, *kai* #170-26). The verb is *splagchnizomai* from which is derived *splagchnon* or one's inner parts or bowels. In other words, the verb intimates being moved at a very deep level of one's being. So many people with so little or no guidance on their part desperately urged Jesus to start teaching, *didasko* + many things. Nothing is said about curing people. Again we have an instance where the bare facts are stated leaving the rest to our imagination.

Apparently the disciples felt a bit sidelined, of being ignored after their successful missionary endeavors, for when evening came, in vs. 35 (*kai* #171-27) they asked Jesus to dismiss the crowds. They reinforced their excuse by reminding him that they were in a lonely place, and that the people should hasten to nearby inhabited areas to purchase bread before nightfall. One wonders if that were possible, given the sparsely populated area and throng of people. Without giving the disciples a chance to speak further, Jesus tells them bluntly to give the crowd something to eat. They responded in a clueless fashion, that is to say, they only had a limited amount of denarii, not enough to feed such a crowd. Jesus then asked how much fish they had, the response being a meager two as well as five loaves of bread.

This test of the disciples is revealing, for it shows they haven't changed at all despite having cast out demons and cured people. Jesus had hoped some of that experience might carry over into the present but apparently not. Instead of speaking with them further, Jesus turned to the people asking them to sit down on the grass which they did (vs. 39, *kai* #172-28 and vs. 40, #173-29). The mood must have been both festive and solemn. Festive in that people were glad to be with Jesus and spontaneously broke into song from time to time and solemn in that they were expecting him to do some teaching or cure people. Indeed, they would not be disappointed even with the onset of twilight. Jesus realized that was the best time to multiply the fish and bread...enough light to see that it was happening yet concealing the details as to how it actually came about. Obviously before doing this Jesus looked up to heaven, blessed the five loaves and two fish and then broke the loaves (vs. 41, *kai* #174-30). Next he gave it to his disciples for distribution which they did in silence, having been put to shame albeit indirectly so as not to be embarrassed.

Vss. 42 through 44 (three instances of *kai*, #175-31, #176-32 and #177-33) simply state the fact that everyone ate their fill after which the disciples collected the remains from the crowd. It numbered some five thousand men minus woman and children which easily could have doubled the crowd. By the time everyone had eaten it must have been completely dark. Despite this, the people broke out again into song will filled the night air.

As for this miracle, the sequence of events in vs. 41 and 42 can be outlined as follows be-

cause there's no explicit mention of any multiplication of bread or fish. Note the verbs which are italicized, again keeping in mind this occurred at twilight or the onset of darkness:

- Taking* the five loaves and two fish
- Jesus *looked up* to heaven
- Jesus *blessed* the five loaves and two fish
- Jesus *broke* the loaves
- Jesus *gave* the broken loaves to the disciples to *set* before the people
- Jesus *divided* the two fish

And so any talk about multiplication of bread and fish should be taken in light of the interaction of the six verbs which are italicized above:

taking→looked up→blessed→broke→gave→divided

In vs. 45 which begins with *kai* (#178-34) but goes untranslated along with *euthus* or immediately, Jesus made his disciples get in the boat, *anagkazo* being a forceful verb also as to compel. The prepositions reflect this: *eis* with respect to the boat, the *pro-* or before of *proago* or to go before, the *eis* or into with respect to the other side and *pros* or towards-which with respect to Bethsaida. The disciples obeyed but wondered why the rush. Did Jesus know something they didn't? Was it for their own safety? More importantly, why did he wish to be left alone with the crowd?

Once the disciples set sail, in vs. 46 (*kai* #179-35) Jesus dismisses the crowd and goes up a mountain to pray apparently in the middle of the night (stumbling up would be more like it). How he escapes the crowd is close to a miracle, given that they rushed to meet him, having anticipating his destination. It'd come as no surprise that he escaped literally under the cover of darkness.

Vs. 47 (*kai* #180-36) speaks of the onset of evening which must have been at the end of the next day. From his vantage point on the mountaintop Jesus saw the disciples struggling against the wind which was against him (vs. 48, *kai* #181-37). The verb for this is *basanizo*, to test, torture. Couple this with *enantios* or "against" with regard to the wind and you have a situation similar to the earlier transit across the Sea of Galilee when a violent storm arose. It should be noted that Jesus saw the ship floundering at night, not during the day. Implied is that he was able to see even in darkness. It'd be pretty difficult to describe what the disciples felt at this moment. The major difference is that they were alone minus their master and thus were devoid of any control over the wind. Some must have deeply resented concurring with Jesus' wish for them to set sail at night. The experienced fishermen among them obviously having special reservations.

Whether experienced or not, the disciples had a terrifying time. They were storm-tossed most of the night until the fourth watch which was shortly before dawn when they saw

Jesus approaching them as he walked on the water. Actually he was hard to pick out clearly in the pre-dawn light along with the wind and rain. As Jesus moved ahead on the water, the waves calmed down so he could proceed. At the same time these waves were rising and falling continuously sometimes blocking sight of Jesus. All it all it was quite frightful, especially as he seemed to be passing them by. No small wonder everyone thought they were seeing a ghost or *phantasma* also as phantasm or image. At that moment everyone considered themselves to be lost. At at the last minute they cried out not so much to Jesus but out of fear (*tarasso*, to be terrified). The verb is *anakrazo* +, the preposition *ana-* intensifying the root as to cry out above.

After Jesus had passed by, immediately (*euthus*) he spoke to them, *laleo* + implying a conversational voice that didn't need to be raised above the storm-tossed sea but only to acknowledge the *anakrazo* of those in the boat. His words were simple and clear over the tumultuous situation, *tharseo* and *phobeo* + or to have courage and not to fear. Thus as soon as Jesus got into the boat (vs. 51 *kai* #182-38) the wind ceased. Naturally everyone was astounded, *existemi* + or to stand-from (*ex-*) with the adverb *lian* or exceedingly.

The next verse is somewhat odd. You'd think Mark would say something about the disciples' reaction. Instead, they were more concerned about not understanding the recent miracle about the loaves, *suniami* +. And so the singular heart or *kardia* + of the disciples was hardened, *poroo* also to make callous or insensible. Perhaps not being able to do the same as their master formed part of this resentment. They had imitated him in other ways during their recent missionary work, so why not this? Though the text says nothing further, the rest of the voyage must have been fraught with tension.

Vs. 53 begins with *kai* (#183-39) when the boat at last reached Gennesaret. As soon as everyone got out of the boat, those on shore at once recognized Jesus (*euthus* and *kai*, the latter being #184-40, vs. 54), the verb being *epigignosko* literally as to know upon, *epi-*. Right away people ran throughout the neighborhood bringing those who were sick whom Jesus cured not only there but in all the surrounding places he visited (vs. 56, *kai* #185-41). Mark throws in a nice detail by mentioning the fringe of Jesus' garment which some had touched and were cured. This, of course, is reminiscent of the woman who had touched the garment of Jesus in 5.28. We can assume that despite all these cures, the disciples remained insensible. Nevertheless, it is to their credit that they remained with Jesus.

Chapter Six has a total of forty-one verses beginning with the conjunctive *kai*.

Chapter Seven

This new chapter begins with the conjunctive *kai* (#186-1) rendered as "now." Some Pharisees as well as scribes from Jerusalem gathered literally to Jesus, the preposition *pros* signaling direction towards-which but not by no means in a positive sense. The verb is

sunago +, the preposition *sun-* or with. For both groups to come from the capital shows a growing concern on the part of the religious authorities. If they allowed Jesus to continue unchecked, in no time the Roman overseers would get involved. That for sure would forebode ill for the nation.

Both groups came at an opportune time, that is, for themselves. Vs. 2 which begins with *kai* (#187-2) has them seeing some of Jesus' disciples eating with defiled hands which is another way of saying unwashed hands. The adjective for defiled is *koinos* or common implying that the disciples didn't observe the appropriate religious custom and behaved like common folk or the Gentiles.

Immediately follows an extended sentence running from vs. 3. through vs. 4 which the RSV has in parentheses. In vs. 3 Mark gives information with regard to the Pharisees as well as all Jews who observe washing their hands before eating which is in according with their elders' tradition. The verb *krateo* + is significant in this context, for it means grasping tightly or favoring the letter with regard to *paradosis*, literally a handing over or beside. Vs. 4 (*kai* #188-3) applies something similar with regard to purification upon coming from the market place plus other observances. In other words, the Pharisees and scribes are blowing these rites of cleansing out of all proportion.

Thus in vs. 5 (*kai* #189-4) the two groups asked Jesus why his disciples do not walk (*peripateo*, literally to walk around) in the tradition or *paradosis* + of the elders. Note that they asked Jesus, not the disciples. It would be beneath their dignity to do otherwise. Jesus responded accordingly. That is to say, Isaiah prophesied well (*kalos*, adverb) of them whom he calls outright hypocrites. There are two versions of Is 29.13 cited here, the one in the text at hand the other from the Septuagint:

"This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me; in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the precepts of men." Note the contrast: *timao* vs. *porro* or to honor vs. far from. The former suggests closeness while the latter distance. Once this parameter is set in place, another parameter easily comes next: *sebomai* and *maten* or worshiping God in vain vs. *didasko* + with regard to *entalma* also as rule.

"And the Lord has said, 'This people draws nigh to me with their mouth, and they honor me with their lips, but their heart is far from me: but in vain do they worship me, teaching the commandments and doctrines of men.'" Though the wording is a bit different, the same sequence of words applies to this verse, so there's no need of repeating it.

Vs. 8 sums up the verse from Isaiah by inserting from what seems to be the same source but is not rendered as such in the Greek critical edition. In other words, we have a contrast between *aphiemi* and *krateo* (both +) or letting go and holding fast. As for the objects of each verb: *entole* and *paradosis* + or commandment and tradition. Jesus, of course, is speaking here with these words being a good way to sum up his attitude.

Vs. 9 which begins with *kai* (#190-5) has Jesus continuing to speak to the Pharisees and scribes without letting them get a word in edgewise. Note the scorn as well as anger in his words. Both groups have a fine way of rejecting God's commandment in order to keep their tradition. *Kalos* + is the adverb which can be rendered as beautifully but obviously here has a sarcastic tone. Note the two verbs, *atheto* and *histemi* + or to set aside and to stand, to place. The two nouns at hand are *entole* and *paradosis* (both +) as in the previous verse.

Then in vs. 9 Jesus quotes two references with regard to Moses, the first honoring one's father and mother, *timao* + and the second as to speaking ill of them, *katalogeo* + where the preposition *kata-* signifies that which is down. The precise reference for the first is Ex 20.12: "Honor your father and your mother that your days may be long in the land which the Lord your God gives you." The second is Ex 21.17: "Whoever curses his father or his mother shall be put to death."

Jesus continues in vs. 11 with reference to Corban, a Hebrew/Aramaic word which means offering. In essence an irresponsible son using Corban in a religious vow could formally dedicate to God his earning which otherwise would have gone to support his parents. However, the money didn't have to go for religious ends. And so using the word Corban was a way of getting around a child's responsibility for parents. Insertion of this word seems to be a way Mark is explaining Jewish religious observances to Gentiles. As for making void the word (*akuroo* or to cancel and *logos* +) of God through tradition or *paradosis* +, teachers of the Law appealed to Num 20.1-2¹² in support of the Corban vow, but Jesus rejects the practice of using one biblical teaching to nullify another.

Vs. 14 (*kai* #191-6) has Jesus calling the people (*ochlos* +) to himself, the preposition *pros*-as direction towards-which prefaced to the root *kaleo* implying that he was looking for support or encouragement from those assembled against the Pharisees and scribes with their legalistic mind set. For the most part these common people were observant yet not legalistic. It simply wasn't in their blood. Jesus bids them to hear him as well as to understand, *akouo*->*sunemi* (both +). He then launches into a simple example as to the intake of food doesn't defile a person. Rather, it's the other way around. In sum, we have an example of *exothern* and *eis* or outside and into. The verb to defile is *koinoo*, literally to make common.¹³

This example, of course, was as clear as could be. As for the Pharisees and scribes, we have no response. They knew they were fabricating an excuse about Jesus' disciples not washing their hands. Furthermore, the people mentioned in vs. 14 could see it plain as day written on the faces of the religious authorities. It was a sign that they were about to

¹² "This is what the Lord had commanded. When a man vows a vow to the Lord or swears an oath to bind himself by a pledge, he shall not break his word; he shall do according to all that proceeds out of his mouth."

¹³ Note that vs. 16 is omitted in the Greek critical text as well as the **RSV**.

melt away but with the intent to continue their plotting against Jesus. As for Jesus, he saw this as a perfect opportunity to enter a house (vs. 17, *kai* #192-7) most likely at the invitation of someone sympathetic towards him. This desire to be alone with those closest to him is made clear by the added words “and left the people.”

The disciples saw this as an opportunity to have Jesus explain the parable. To their surprise, in vs. 18 (*kai* #193-8) Jesus pretty much rebukes them in the form of two rhetorical questions. The first is straight-forward, that they lack understanding, *asunetos* also as witless. The second is a bit more extended but built upon the just mentioned *asunetos*. That is to say, the disciples failed to see that any food he eats can't cause defilement...literally “can't make him common or *koinoo* +...since it enters his stomach instead of his heart or *kardia* +. There follows a sentence in vs. 19 which the RSV has in parentheses, that Jesus has declared all foods clean, *katharizo* + which to the religious authorities came across as blasphemous.

Jesus continues speaking in vs. 20, that is, what comes from a man defiles him; i.e., *ex* or from is equivalent to making him *koinos* + or common, if you will. He then extends what's represented by *ex* to its opposite in the sense of its counterpart, *esothēn* or from within. This *esothēn* is where the *kardia* + or one's heart is located, the source of an enormous inventory of thirteen disagreeable things starting with *dialogismos*. In a way this word sums them all up, that is, *logismos* or thought prefaced with the preposition *dia-* or though. Jesus concludes with the thirteen he enumerates as evil things or *poneros* also as grievous as well as painful. To them is added the adjective *koinos* +. One can just imagine what the disciples thought after this, more or less reduced to silence, almost having regretting asking Jesus to explain the parable.

Vs. 24 recounts Jesus going on an extended journey to the region of Tyre, *orion* (boundary, limit) in place of Sidon as in the RSV. As for Tyre, it was essentially a Gentile city. Obviously on a journey like this there must have been plenty of intimate conversations with the disciples, Jesus with them all and among themselves. In the situation at hand, they wondered why Jesus was leaving familiar territory for an alien place. Though such journeys were tiresome, they offered a good opportunity for all to know each other better. Then vs. 24 says rather cryptically that Jesus entered a house and didn't want anyone to know about it. At the same time he couldn't keep this a secret, *lanthano* in the negative, that is, to hide.¹⁴

Contrast this secretiveness with vs. 24 which begins tellingly with *alla* or “but.” It turns out that a woman heard of Jesus because she was in dire straits because of a daughter possessed by an unclean spirit, a *pneuma* which is *akathartos* (both +). Here desperation is reflected in *euthus* or immediately and the preposition *pros-* (direction towards-which)

¹⁴ The NIV has a good explanation as any in this regard: “Ever since the feeding of the 5,000 Jesus and his disciples had been for the most part skirting the region of Galilee. His purpose was to avoid the opposition in Galilee and to secure opportunity to teach his disciples privately.”

prefaced to *pipto* or to fall down (*prospipto*). So if she got word of Jesus being in the area, that infers that quite a few others heard about him. At the same time he may not have been as well known, this being an area inhabited by Gentiles.

In vs. 26 the woman asked Jesus to cast the demon (*daimonion*) from her daughter identified in the previous verse as an unclean spirit, the verb *erotao* more along the lines of asking. Without missing a beat in the next verse (27, *kai* #194-9)¹⁵ Jesus more or less shrugged her off remarking that children are to be fed first, that it's not fitting (*kalos* +) their food not be handed over to the dogs. However, to his surprise the woman retorted at once that even dogs should get the crumbs from the table of their masters. This is one of those rare occasions where Jesus meets his match and the two really enjoyed sparring with each other, albeit briefly. The result? In vs. 29 (*kai* #195-10) Jesus told the woman to go home, for the demon had left her daughter (*kai* #196-11, vs. 30). And so ended Jesus' visit to the region of Tyre with the incident just recounted as apparently the only one Mark found worth noting.

Vs. 31 begins with *kai* (#197-12) rendered as "then" where Jesus returns to the Sea of Galilee. Once there, (vs. 32, *kai* #198-13) people brought to him a man described as having an impediment in his speech, *mogilalos*. Jesus willingly agreed to cure the man but do privately (*kat' idian*, literally 'according to one's own', *kai* #199-14) using the word *Eph-phatha*, Aramaic for "Be opened." The man then began to speak plainly or *orthos* also as rightly, correctly (vs. 35, *kai* #200-15).

Interestingly there was an ongoing kind of conflict between Jesus and those present with regard to this cure. Jesus kept on charging (*diastello* +) them to keep quiet (vs. 36, *kai* #201-16) about it which fueled them all the more to proclaim the miracle with zeal. The verb is *kerusso* + as to proclaim publicly with the comparative *perissos* or beyond measure. A similar word is used in vs. 37 (*kai* #202-17), the adverb *huperperissos*, beyond all measure with the verb *ekplesso*. In other words, the two prepositions *huper-* and *ek-* or beyond and from show the complete awe manifested by all who witnessed this cure which despite its value, on the surface seemed rather insignificant. In sum, they all exclaimed that Jesus has done all things well, *kalos* + as adverb.

And so Chapter Seven concludes with yet another "mistake" on the part of Jesus. He effects a cure which obviously will have public reverberations while at the same time tells everyone not to speak of it. Thus Jesus is caught between wanting to cure people while at the same time know manifesting who he truly happens to be. In other words, he doesn't quite know how to avoid notoriety, a dilemma that affects the entirety of his public life.

Chapter Seven has a total of seventeen verses beginning with the conjunctive *kai*.

Chapter Eight

¹⁵ This is the longest interval to date between two instances of *kai*, the last being in vs. 18.

This chapter opens with “in those days” seems to be a general way of situating the occasion when Jesus fed some four thousand people, a kind of repeat of 6.30-44. As a footnote in the RSV puts it, this incident contains “details of which we can no longer determine.” As noted in other places, the terse way Mark presents his Gospel pretty much in a terse fashion...shorthand, if you will. This makes it more challenging to expand the text for the purpose of doing *lectio divina*. Thus we have to be content with following a tighter walk, if you will.

A great crowd (*ochlos* +) found themselves with nothing to eat, the occasion not given. This prompted Jesus to call his disciples (*proskaleo* +) implying that they may have been dispersed among the people, some of whom they must have known. He expressed compassion literally upon (*epi*) the crowd, *splagchnizo* + more like being moved in one's bowels, this word being part of the verb at hand as noted on another occasion. The major difference with this gathering is that the people had been with Jesus a total of three days most likely as he went through them curing and teaching. In fact, quite a few came from some distance and should they start returning home, there was the danger of some fainting on the way, *ekluo* (vs. 3, *kai* #203-1). The root means to loosen and here is prefaced with the preposition *ek-* or from. Thus the text shows how far and wide Jesus' reputation had spread.

In vs. 4 (*kai* #204-2) his disciples asked...and rightly so...how could he feed an *ochlos* in the desert, *eremia*? Actually you could feel a barely disguised tone of anger the way they responded to him. Nevertheless, Jesus asked how many loaves of bread they had (vs. 5, *kai* #205-3) which was seven after which he bade everyone to sit down on the grass (vs. 6, *kai* #206-4). The act of multiplying these seven loaves is outlined as follows along with seven small fish (vs. 7, *kai* #207-5):

- commanded the crowd to sit down
- took the seven loaves
- having given thanks*
- broke the seven loaves
- gave them to his disciples
- disciples *set* the bread before the people
- disciples *did set* the bread before the people
- blessed* a few small fish
- commanded* that fish be set before the crowd
- the crowd *ate* and *were satisfied*
- took up broken pieces left over

The reason for this outline, similar to what happened in Chapter Six, is that it's difficult to recount a miracle where a limited amount of things are multiplied beyond measure. Hence attention is to be on the italicized verbs which relate to this multiplication. As soon as everyone had eaten and were satisfied, in vs. 8 the leftovers were taken up in

seven baskets (*kai* #208-6; vs. 9, *kai* #209-7). It seems that no one had questioned the source of this abundance of food. And so Jesus dismissed the crowd in vs. 10 (*kai* #210-8) and got into the boat with his disciples and went to the district of Dalmanutha. A footnote in the RSV says this place is unknown.

Though vs. 11 (it begins with *kai* but isn't translated, #211-9) has the Pharisees having come who began arguing with Jesus. How they got wind of this is secondary in a terse account noted in the first paragraph. Mark is more interested in moving from one important event to the next but while doing so, he doesn't neglect the situation at hand.

As for the Pharisees, their intent is to seek a sign from heaven as well as to test Jesus, the two verbs *zeteo* and *peirazo* + being pretty much the same. As for the former, *semeion* or sign is for these men a kind of slap in the face, they wanting to see something spectacular. Even if Jesus had produced it, almost certainly they wouldn't be impressed but would continue to seek his demise as they did from the beginning. No small wonder that Jesus' response in vs. 12 (*kai* #212-10) was to sign deeply in his spirit or *pneuma* + where the preposition *ana-* on or upon prefaced to the root *stenazo* intensifies the meaning.

No small wonder that in vs. 12 (*kai* #213-11) Jesus exclaims aloud as to why this generation seeks a sign. His disciples must have felt that frustration even more deeply and basically were in the same situation as the Pharisees with a major exception. They were open to being corrected and shown the truth. And so Jesus said outrightly that the current generation will not get a sign. In vs. 13 (*kai* #214-12) Jesus gets back in the boat all by himself impatiently awaiting his disciples to follow suite which they did. As for the Pharisees, although having suffered a severe rebuke, still they felt vindicated at having made Jesus leave their presence seemingly afraid to engage in conversation with them.

Vs. 14 begins with the conjunctive *kai* translated as "now" (#215-13) which action shifts to inside the boat, the disciples finding themselves with just one loaf of bread. This prompted Jesus to caution (*diastello* +) them in vs. 15 (*kai* #216-14), by using an example which we could see as loosely tied in with the recent multiplication of bread. He uses two verbs relative to sight, *horao* and *blepo* (both +) as noted in 4.12, here rendered as to take heed and beware of. Both pertain to the leaven of the Pharisees, for once it gets inside a person, it will rise...better, swell...and bloat him or her instead of fostering growth. The same applies to Herod, a Jewish client of Rome and responsible for the recent beheading of John the Baptist.

In vs. 16 (*kai* #217-15) we get a response from the disciples which is both astonishing as well as embarrassing. While they discussed what Jesus had said to them among each other (*dialogizomai* + with *pros*, direction towards-which), their response must have been enough to make Jesus get out of the boat and walk away on the water. Unfortunately he could both see and hear what was going on by reason of the confined space of the boat, so without wasting a minute in vs. 17 (*kai* #218-16), he knew they were focused on not having bread. That made him throw out at them in pointed fashion five rapid eight

rhetorical questions in the next few verses:

- ginosko* + or Jesus knowing about the discussion
- dialogizomai* + or discussing in earnest not having bread
- both lacking *noeo* and *suniemi* + or not perceiving and not understanding
- the single *kardia* + or heart for the plural disciples being hardened, *poroo* +
- eyes and ears: not seeing and not hearing. This is in light of Jer 5.21: “Hear this, O foolish and senseless people who have eyes but see not, who have ears but hear not.”
- lack of *mnemoneuo* or remembering
- Jesus ask how many baskets of leftovers remained
- suniemi* + or lack of understanding, *kai* #219-17, vs. 21

Finally in vs. 22 (*kai* #220-18) they arrived at Bethsaida last mentioned in 6.45 with regard to a boat. Indeed, that must have been the longest boat trip ever for both Jesus and the disciples. After Jesus hit them with the above eight questions, everyone was reduced to silence, hoping the wind would continue to prevail so they'd arrive at their destination as quickly as possible.

As soon as Jesus and his disciples disembarked some people brought a blind man to him in order to touch him. The verb is *hupto* + which infers that Jesus would restore the man's sight by this simple gesture. They must have heard plenty occasions when Jesus touched people and were cured at once. In vs. 23 (*kai* #221-19) Jesus felt the need to deal with this man privately which is why he led him outside the village after which he spat on his eyes and laid his hands upon him. It was up to the disciples to keep everyone else back which they did. And so Jesus leading the blind man away must have been quite a sight to behold.

The restoration of the blind man's sight was done in two parts. Vs. 24 (*kai* #222-20) has him responding to a question by Jesus, that is, could he see anything. The man answered that to him people resembled trees. This prompted Jesus to lay his hands upon the blind man's eyes—a more direct contact, if you will—after which followed three of the following steps:

-He looked intently or *diablepo*, the verbal root *blepo* prefaced with the preposition *dia-* or through

-His eyesight was restored, *apokathistemi* consisting of *histemi* or to stand, to place prefaced with two prepositions, *apo-* and *kata-* or from and according to.

-He saw everything clearly or *enblepo* prefaced with the preposition *en-* or in; the adverb is *telaugos* also as plainly.

And so this cure ended in a rather strange fashion, that is, in vs. 26 (*kai* #223-21) Jesus forbade the cured man to return home and not even think of entering the village. End of story. That, it seems, is a request next to impossible to carry out. Let's say the man agreed to do this. Everyone would wonder what had happened and rush to seek him out. After all, in the first place they were generous enough to bring him to Jesus.

In typical fashion Jesus moved on with his disciples to Caesarea Philippi, vs. 27 (*kai* #224-22). En route he asked them who do people claim him to be. This evoked three responses, all to be expected from devout Jews: John the Baptist, Elijah and one of the prophets. Elijah was mentioned in 6.15 as also referring to Jesus. Part of this identity can be traced to the fact of Elijah being taken into heaven and thus having escaped death (cf. 2Kg 2.11). Jesus could tell by the look on the disciples' faces that they were uncertain, so he decided to try the same question on Peter (vs. 29, *kai* #225-23) who apparently had remained silent during this exchange. Without missing a beat Peter said simply that Jesus was the Christ or the anointed one. This prompted Jesus in vs. 30 (*kai* #226-24) to bring this interchange to an abrupt close with no further discussion or more specifically, the disciples are not to tell anyone about him, *epitimaō* +, the preposition *epi-* or upon inferring a more serious injunction.

In vs. 31 (*kai* #227-25) Jesus figures that what had just said needs to be fleshed out more clearly for the disciples' common understanding. He realized they had been with him for a while now, wavered here and there, yet despite all this, remained with him. Time indeed for more information as to his mission. And so Jesus teaches (*didaskō* +) them by speaking of himself as an object, another person. Perhaps this way will mitigate the hard reality they're about to hear. It can be broken into four parts:

- suffer many things, *pascho* also as to experience
- be rejected *apodokimazo* also as to be regarded as unfit, this with regard to the religious authorities
- to be killed or *apokteino*: second verb with the preposition *apo-* or from prefaced to it
- to rise or *anistemi*

Vs. 32 which begins with *kai* #228-26 comes off with a genuine understatement: "And he said this (*logos* +) plainly." The adverb in Greek is a noun, *parresia* which means the ability to speak freely and without recrimination as in a public forum. In the same verse Peter responds with equal *parresia*, if you will, by taking Jesus or *proslambano* where *pros-* as direction towards-which intimates directness followed by *epitimaō* + or letting him have it for speaking so forcefully and pretty much predicting his end. This had absolutely no effect on Jesus who first turns and looks at the disciples before in turn rebuking Peter.

The *epistrephō* + or turning upon (*epi-*) by Jesus is deliberate. He wants to make a clear and unmistakable example by calling Peter Satan as not being on God's side but man's. This last part has the verb *phroneō* or to think, to understand what pertains to God and what pertains to men. In other words, Peter is not just clueless as to Jesus' mission (the other disciples also are as such) but has the gumption to challenge the master. Despite the shocking identity with Satan, what saves Peter, of course, is his impulsiveness is done out of love for Jesus. Surely this quick but decisive encounter remained with the disciples for good.

In vs. 34 (*kai* #229-27) Jesus summons (*proskaleo*) not just his disciples but the crowd or *ochlos* (both +), the latter always hovering close by, and speaks of himself in shocking, even revolting terms. Should anyone wish to come after him, he must deny himself—not so bad, really—and take up his cross. Reference to the Roman method of public execution must have sent shock waves throughout all present, especially his disciples and Peter after their recent less than desirable encounter. As for crosses, there must have been plenty around as just outside Jerusalem where the Romans regularly crucified people thereby giving a lasting horrifying impression.

Jesus continues without mentioning but inferring the Roman cross in terms of saving life as equivalent to losing it and losing life for his sake as saving it. The noun here is *psuche* also rendered as soul which has the same value as the gospel or *euaggelion* +. In other words, we have an interplay between *sozo* and *apollumi* (both +). Note that the second part adds “for my sake” whereas the first doesn’t have it.

Jesus doesn’t mitigate his message in the least. Instead, he continues in the next two verses by throwing out two rhetorical questions. The first concerns gaining the whole world at the price of forfeiting his life, the two contrasting verbs being *kerdaino* and *zemiooo* to make a profit and to confiscate. The second rhetorical question concerns asking what a person can give in return for his life. At issue is *antallagma* or something given in exchange.

Jesus brings all these dramatic words and examples to a conclusion by speaking of shame, *epaischunomai* being intensified by the preposition *epi-* or upon prefaced to the verbal root. The shame with regard to Jesus is balanced by the shame the Son of man shows towards those persons. Thus we have Jesus speaking of himself and as Son of man. Note that the first shame also pertains to his words or *logos* + which of course means his message as well as his mission. The first shame pales in comparison with the second when the Son of man comes in his Father’s glory (*doxa*) along with his holy angels or messengers, *aggelos* +. No small wonder that the disciples continued to remain with Jesus after all this. As for the multitude mentioned in vs. 34, we can assume that most if not all melted away. The only thing that kept the rest from leaving was the hope of Jesus doing some more curing and healing.

Chapter Eight has a total of twenty-seven verses beginning with the conjunctive *kai*.